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Celebrity Buzz

Clooney puts self up for adoption

pg 22

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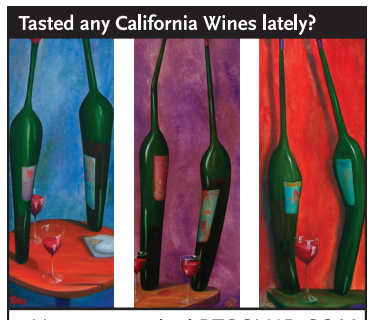
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"We're very preoccupied and worried that unemployment is going to rise sharply. Is the EI change sufficient...?" Liberals' Michael Ignatieff

"In today's budget, he prioritized $60 billion in corporate tax cuts and only $1.15 billion for the unemployed." NDP's Jack Layton

"They're not targeted enough. (There is) nothing in (the Conservative's budget) to obtain our support." BQ's Gilles Duceppe

Budget bleeds red

Tories project deficits until 2013 to battle recession

The Conservatives delivered a fixer-upper budget meant to rebuild the economy and get Canadians working, pumping $40 billion over two years into everything from income tax cuts and help for home renovations to increased jobless benefits and cash for urban reconstruction.

Canadians will find out today if the Conservatives' economic safety net has earned the support of federal Liberals.

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff offered a mixed review but said he would announce this morning whether to vote down the budget — and defeat Prime Minister Stephen Harper's minority government.

He said the budget's big-ticket spending and new assistance for the jobless was a "positive" response to "the combined pressure of the opposition parties," which threatened to topple the government.

But the Liberal leader questioned whether Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has done enough to improve employment insurance (EI) benefits and whether funds for infrastructure will flow quickly.

The Conservatives boast the budget, aimed at reducing the impact of a growing global recession, will create or maintain close to 190,000 jobs. But the Tories are forecasting a $34-billion deficit in the next fiscal year and deficits totalling almost $85 billion over five years. Not until 2013 does the budget forecast a surplus.

Flaherty defended the "temporary" deficit spending, calling it "necessary to stimulate our economy."

NDP Leader Jack Layton quickly criticized the budget. He said it is Ignatieff's responsibility to defeat the budget as it fails to meet the tests the Liberal leader set for his support.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cuts in hindsight

- Harper's cut to the Goods and Services Tax from seven to six per cent, then to five per cent has been projected to cost the federal coffers about $12 billion in 2009-10.

CHRIS WATTIE/REUTERS

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty pauses as he delivers his budget in the House of Commons in Ottawa yesterday. The Conservatives' budget will run a deficit of $34 billion in the next fiscal year.

Budget Highlights

- Cut personal taxes by $20 billion over six years, including raising the upper limit of the two lowest personal income-tax brackets.
- Cut business taxes by $2 billion over six years.
- $7.8 billion for social housing and private home renovation, including a one-year Home Renovation Tax Credit of up to $1,350 per household.
- $12 billion ($7 billion in new cash) for infrastructure spending, with $1 billion for "green" infrastructure, and $1 billion for clean-energy research.
- $2.7 billion in short-term loans to the auto industry.
- $8.3 billion for skills and training.
- Extend EI benefits by five weeks for two years.

Canada 2009
Federal **Budget**

- Newlyweds enjoy savings from tax relief pg 3
- Reaction across Canada pg 3
- Ignatieff to decide Tories', coalition's fate pg 7
- Green plan panned pg 8
- Kate MacNamara on following Bob the Builder pg 10
- Business groups applaud pg 11

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Enumeration notices to be mailed next week
Elections B.C. is sending out two million enumeration notices next week to make sure all eligible voters are registered ahead of the May election. The notice will also provide a first look at the names of the new ridings that come into effect in the spring. METRO VANCOUVER

Local

Earthbound star-viewing at planetarium

Vancouver's H.R. MacMillan Space Centre will be projecting stars of a different kind to the planetarium screen on Feb. 22. Oscar fans will be offered the chance to watch the 81st Academy Awards telecast on a roughly 7.5-metre section of the screen. METRO VANCOUVER

Federal Budget 2009

Couple benefit from tax break

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

A newly married Vancouver couple will save about $1,100 in taxes this year, thanks to almost $20 billion over five years in tax relief announced in yesterday's federal budget.

Karen Chan, 29, and Amy Romanas, 35, were married last January and are filing their tax returns together for the first time.

Combined, the couple earns about $100,000 annually.

"I've never done it before, so it's a little, 'Oh my God,'" said Chan, a human-resources specialist.

"We're trying to decide whether or not to do it ourselves through software packages or whether we look at getting an accountant."

Brian Blamey, a certified general accountant and partner with Vancouver-based Galloway Botteselle & Co., said the couple can expect a little more spending money this year.

"The increase in the basic personal exemption and the increase in the tax brackets will save (Romanas) about $580 and (Chan) about $540," Blamey said.

They are benefiting from an increase in the basic personal exemption to $10,320, up from $9,600, as well as the 7.5 per cent increase to the three federal tax brackets.

JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO VANCOUVER

Newly married couple Amy Romanas and Karen Chan relax in their Vancouver apartment. They are filing their taxes together for the first time this year and stand to save about $1,100 after cuts announced by the federal government yesterday.

Reaction across the Country

Halifax — Senior citizen

Marilyn Peers saw some new money for seniors in the federal budget, but the 77-year-old Halifax resident hoped for more.

"It's going to be worse than better in the near future, and (seniors) have a lot of concern for our adult children, as well as how it will affect us," she said.

Toronto — Single income

A young family with only one full time income, the Melvilles say they weren't expecting much from the federal budget.

The most significant detail in the budget for the Melvilles was the home renovation tax credit, which they said they'll make good use of.

Ottawa — Student

A student at the University of Ottawa, Adrianne Walton, 31, said she wanted to see more money for universities.

Ian Lee, MBA director for the Sprott School of Business at Carleton University, said there was $2 billion for the renewal and refurbishment of buildings at universities and colleges across Canada in the budget.

Calgary — Double income family ($150K), 2 kids

A Calgary small business owner, proud husband and father of two, Mike April said there wasn't a lot that he could see directly benefiting them in the budget, aside from the tax cuts.

Dean Paley, tax professional for Edward Jones Canada, said the Aprils will see about $350 per year in tax relief.

Edmonton — Single parent

For single father Warren Dahlen, 41, yesterday's federal budget announcement means he should be able to keep putting food on the table in front of his two young daughters.

A $12-billion infrastructure promise is good news for the electrician, whose employment is secured by new construction.

Federal budget gets B.C. 'thumbs up,' reservations

Vancouver is hoping to transform yesterday's federal budget into $120 million in storm-water, sewage and bridge upgrades.

The city hopes to get matching federal and provincial funding for $60-70 million in sewer and storm-water upgrades and $50 million for upgrading the Burrard and Granville bridges.

Mayor Gregor Robertson, however, said he was disappointed by the amount allotted for transit and for constructing new social housing.

"What we really needed in Vancouver is to create new housing," Robertson said. "Investment in new social housing to address our homeless challenge. There aren't new dollars for that, which is a disappointment."

Provincial NDP Leader Carole James said she was glad to see mention of the Evergreen Line as well as funding for seniors and First Nations housing.

Her biggest concern was extending the employment insurance benefits for unemployed workers by five weeks for a total of 50 weeks. James said it should be increased by another year.

"Frankly, it's a slap in the face to workers and their families today … we're not going to see the economy turn around in five weeks."

In a conference call, B.C. Finance Minister Colin Hansen gave the budget a "thumbs up," specifically with regards to housing and infrastructure. JEFF HODSON /METRO VANCOUVER

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Budget Full coverage of the budget, with opposition reaction, highlights and hits and misses at **metronews.ca/canada**

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Juno tickets on sale Saturday

This Saturday, 500 early bird packages are going on sale for Juno weekend events in Vancouver. Broadcast tickets for the 2009 Juno Awards, which are scheduled for March 29 at GM Place, go on sale Feb. 7 and range in price from $69 to $189. METRO VANCOUVER

RCMP actions unprofessional, inquiry hears

Officers obstructed help to Dziekanski, firefighter says

TARYN MCELHERAN
for Metro Vancouver

A Richmond firefighter described the actions of the RCMP officers who Tasered Robert Dziekanski as "unprofessional."

Capt. Kirby Graeme told the Braidwood inquiry yesterday that he arrived at Vancouver International Airport to find the Polish immigrant lying face-down on the ground, handcuffed and unresponsive to any attempts of communication.

"You could see them just standing," Graeme said of the RCMP officers who Tasered Dziekanski multiple times. "Same with the security people. Nobody seemed to be doing anything."

When he asked that Dziekanski's handcuffs be removed, Graeme said that one officer replied, "'He's been violent. I'm not going to take the cuffs off.'"

Walter Kosteckyj, the lawyer for Dziekanski's mother, asked if he thought the officers were "obstructing … efforts to be able to help this man."

Graeme said, "Yes."

He was later asked to describe the police response.

"I saw it being unprofessional," Graeme said.

On Oct. 14, 2007, Dziekanski spent as many as 10 hours at YVR waiting for his mother. He eventually became agitated and was Tasered. His handcuffs were finally removed when paramedics arrived. Attempts to revive him failed.

Olympics **Running for a Special cause**

KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson, flanked by Special Olympic athletes, holds the Special Olympic torch outside city hall yesterday. Runners were participating in the Law Enforcement Torch Run, an international fundraising campaign to raise money and awareness about the Special Olympics, which will be held in Idaho next month.

Police look into alleged assault

PROBE Abbotsford police Chief Const. Bob Rich will oversee a Police Act investigation into the actions of an off-duty Delta police officer who was arrested following an alleged assault on a newspaper delivery man in Vancouver.

Firoz Khan said he was beaten and robbed by three men who shouted racist slurs outside the Hyatt Regency in Vancouver last Wednesday morning.

On Monday, Vancouver police recommended charges of assault and possession of stolen property against a New Westminster police officer and robbery charges against a West Vancouver police officer.

No charges were recommended against the Delta officer, who Chief Const. Jim Chu said might have been trying to break up the alleged attack. METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

ROBBERIES Three Surrey men have been arrested in connection with 13 armed robberies that took place last weekend. Sean Burton, 28, Todd Morrow, 51, and Talwinder Chohand, 24, have been charged. RCMP said two of the robberies were never reported to police.

DEATH A 26-year-old man has died in hospital after being found shot on a Surrey street. Andrew Michael Cilliers was shot early yesterday morning.

INJURY The father of a Coquitlam toddler who was hospitalized with serious head injuries says he's been kept in the dark about the situation, cknw.com reports. Mark Lucas said he doesn't know how his son Bodan was injured, but says he's been told his son will likely never recover. METRO VANCOUVER

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VANCOUVER

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*No purchase necessary. Open to residents of Canada only, aged 19 or older. There are five prizes to be won; two pairs of Canucks tickets (each set valued at $200) and three Canucks replica jerseys (each valued at $100) Enter at the Cambie Best Buy store on January 29, 2009 between 4pm-6pm. Odds of winning depend on number of entrants. Event subject to change without notice. Alex Burrows will sign autographs only as time allows.

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Atheist ad campaign targets Calgary

The Freethought Association of Canada is targeting Calgary for its next round of advertising intended to promote atheism, CBC News Online reports. The ads would carry a simple message: There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life. The group is currently waiting for approval to put its ads on buses in Toronto. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canada

Lotto winner looking to share loot

Five former employees of a St. Catharines, Ont., Tim Hortons should get a sweet treat the next time Jorma Hogbacka sees them. "There was five girls working down there and I promised when I win the big money, I'd give each one of them $30,000," the 60-year-old St. Catharines man said yesterday as he held a $14.8-million cheque at the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. prize centre. Hogbacka split Saturday's $44.4-million 6-49 jackpot with two other winners. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Icebreaker stuck in ice before freeing cruise ship

QUEBEC It wasn't something they had expected, getting stuck in the thick ice of the St. Lawrence River. Neither did the 300 guests aboard the Vacancier cruise ship expect the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker that came to get them out would suffer the same fate.

But the icebreaker Terry Fox, considered one of Canada's two "heavy" icebreakers, did itself get caught up in the ice, leading some to wonder whether the coast guard has adequate icebreaking capabilities, in spite of the fact that Canada is an Arctic country.

"I was surprised to see it having such a hard time," said James Gray, a passenger on the Vacancier. "It's not a big icebreaker and the ice here is pretty exceptional ... I don't think we're really well-equipped in Canada to break the ice."

> **"It's not a big icebreaker and the ice here is pretty exceptional."**
> Vacancier passenger

A coast guard communications officer denied the Terry Fox got stuck. "It just had difficulty to move in the ice," she said. "There is a difference."

The captain of the chartered Vacancier, Bernard Langford, however, said the icebreaker was, indeed, trapped, and had to give up working overnight Monday because of the extreme ice conditions. The ice was more than two metres thick in parts, he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Strike takes ugly turn

Protesters clash with police outside Ontario legislature

As debate on back-to-work legislation continued for the third day at the Ontario legislature yesterday, four protesters were arrested while they made their way from the Ministry of Labour offices to the legislature.

RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Four people were arrested yesterday as 200 members of CUPE and their supporters rallied in downtown Toronto. The rally was to protest back-to-work legislation proposed by the Ontario government as it attempts to intervene in a strike at York University.

The two men and two women were arrested after an officer contacted his dispatcher to say "he needed assistance," said Toronto police Const. Tony Vella, a media spokesperson. Bystanders who witnessed the protest also contacted police to say an officer needed help, Vella added.

Charges include assaulting police officers and obstructing police, according to Vella. "Four officers sustained minor injuries," he said. "All four are being charged."

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, stung by accusations of fumbling the York University strike, says the government is exploring a new commission that would intervene when campus labour disputes are getting out of hand.

A commission won't help the nearly 45,000 York University students still not in class, said Canadian Union of Public Employees President Sid Ryan, who added that if back-to-work legislation passes today or tomorrow, CUPE may be forced to launch a court action on the basis that it violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"If we pursue it, the strike will be prolonged," Ryan told a news conference at Queen's Park yesterday. "We don't want to go down that road."

York officials say the two sides are at a true impasse, said Alex Bilyk, a university spokesperson. "We are in a deadlock," he said. "This legislation is the only certain way to make it (end) now."

The union's last offer was more than double the university's offer for settlement, York president Mamdouh Shoukri said. "That is an impasse by any standards," he said in a statement. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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sp: metro Photo by: John Kamitakahara

Mammograms lagging in women after childhood cancer: Report

HEALTH Women who underwent chest radiation as part of treatment for childhood cancer often are not getting recommended breast cancer screenings despite being at high risk for the disease, researchers said yesterday.

Experts recommend these women have an annual mammogram, or breast X-ray, to screen for breast cancer starting at age 25, or eight years after radiation treatment, whichever is later.

But among women ages 25 to 39 in this group, 47 per cent had never had a mammogram, and only 23 per cent had one in the past year, the researchers wrote in the Journal of the American Medical Association. REUTERS

At risk

- The study involved women in Canada and the United States who had cancers such as Hodgkin's disease as children or young adults and were treated with moderate- to high-dose radiation to the chest, which can raise the risk of breast cancer.

News in brief

CHALK RIVER Opposition MPs rapped the government in question period yesterday about an early December leak at the Chalk River nuclear plant, about 185 kilometres northwest of Ottawa, CBC News Online reports. Liberal MP Geoff Regan wanted to know why the government hadn't informed Canadians about this "grave security problem."

GREYHOUND A man attacked the driver of a Greyhound bus en route to Toronto from Detroit yesterday. There were 11 people on board. The driver, a 51-year-old man, fought off the attacker and averted tragedy. The attacker was arrested under the Mental Health Act and taken to a hospital for minor injuries and a psychiatric assessment.

SASKATCHEWAN A teenage boy accused of threatening students and school staff with a gun in Regina last year has pleaded guilty to forcible confinement and uttering threats, CBC News Online reports. In youth court yesterday, the teen also pleaded guilty to possession of a dangerous weapon. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Bishop challenges 'moral legitimacy' of Alberta oilsands

LETTER The rapid-fire development of Alberta's oilsands region has garnered a new critic — the Catholic bishop whose diocese extends over the world's second-largest oil reserves.

Luc Bouchard, bishop of the diocese of St. Paul, which covers nearly 156,000 square kilometres of Alberta, said that "the integrity of creation in the Athabasca oilsands is clearly being sacrificed for economic gain."

In a letter to the region's 55,000 Catholics, the bishop wrote that the exploitation of the resource is environmentally unsound, challenging the "moral legitimacy of oilsands production." REUTERS

Barrels

- More than a million barrels of oil a day are produced from Alberta's oilsands.

Deficit vs. debt
A national deficit occurs when a government's annual expenditures exceed its revenues. The national debt is the accumulation that remains unpaid from all past annual deficits since 1867. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Federal
Budget 2009

Big spenders
Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney both spent Canada deeper and deeper into debt during the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. Trudeau failed to balance the books for 15 years as prime minister. Mulroney never managed to produce a surplus.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tories await their fate

NDP, Bloc immediately condemn budget; Liberal decision today

The fate of the Conservative government lies with Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff, who says he is concerned the Harper government has underestimated the economic crisis.

Ignatieff, who met with his Liberal caucus last night, was to announce today whether his party would support the government's economic plan, or possibly join with the NDP and the Bloc Québécois to defeat the Conservatives in the Commons.

There was talk among some Liberals last night about possibly proposing an amendment to the budget to address some of the party's concerns.

New Democrat Leader Jack Layton and Bloc Québécois Leader Gilles Duceppe swiftly condemned the budget as a failed "ideological" document that does not address the needs of the jobless and the most vulnerable, nor move Canada toward a greener economy.

Their parties intend to vote to defeat the government on the budget, and Layton publicly pressured Ignatieff to do the same.

Layton said the budget fails on the very tests — helping the most vulnerable, protecting the jobs of today and creating jobs for tomorrow — that Ignatieff had set out.

"He has a choice to make," Layton told reporters. "It's either to prop up the Harper government and allow it to continue in a fashion that is clearly wrong-headed, or to pursue the agenda laid out by the coalition, which would create jobs for the future and would transform our economy and would really protect the people who are suffering the most from the economic crisis."

Layton was referring to the agreement signed by the Liberals and NDP in December to form a coalition, supported by the Bloc, to replace the Conservative government.

Ignatieff, however, said yesterday the Conservative budget contained "some positive elements" that he credited to the political pressure brought to bear by the united opposition parties before Christmas.

He said there are also "negative aspects."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
MORE ON IGNATIEFF'S DECISION, PAGE 8

SHAUN BEST/REUTERS

Bloc Québécois Leader Gilles Duceppe, left, talks with New Democratic Party Leader Jack Layton yesterday in the foyer of the House of Commons on Parliament Hill after listening to the budget speech.

"He has a choice to make. It's either to prop up the Harper government and allow it to continue in a fashion that is clearly wrong-headed, or to pursue the agenda laid out by the coalition, which would create jobs for the future and would transform our economy and would really protect the people who are suffering the most from the economic crisis."
NDP Leader Jack Layton on Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff

Many wild cards in play for future of the economy

The federal budget is a "prudent" prescription to help heal Canada's ailing economy, but the modest stimulus spending and tax cuts alone may not be enough to pull Canada out of its deepening recession, economists said yesterday.

Dubbing the budget "Canada's economic action plan," Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said the measures were aimed at resuscitating consumer spending and protecting increasingly vulnerable jobs amid a worsening global recession.

Flaherty said measures to shore up the sputtering economy must begin within the next 120 days to be effective. Overall, the government hopes its action plan will create or preserve up to 190,000 jobs for Canadians by the end of 2010.

Private sector economists, however, stressed the outlook for the global economy remains clouded. There are many wild cards, including the future direction of commodity prices and the timing of any eventual economic recovery in the United States — not to mention the future health of Canada's own housing and stock markets.

Since the global economic meltdown was originally sparked by events outside this country's borders, the government's "made-in-Canada" solution is unlikely to be a cure-all for the domestic economic funk.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Savings to trickle down
- Economists said the permanent nature of tax breaks would help those savings trickle down into the real economy, contrasting them with the temporary tax rebates doled out to Americans last year. Lower-income Canadians, they say, have a greater propensity to consume.

EI benefits extended five weeks

Ottawa's plan to extend employment insurance by five weeks is better than nothing, say some workers struggling with job loss and an uncertain future.

But for those whose EI has already run out, yesterday's federal budget offered little comfort.

Economists, labour groups and business leaders had also called on Ottawa to end regional inequities in the system that make it easier for the unemployed in some parts of the country to qualify than in others.

They note that reforms during the 1990s to limit access and benefits to employment insurance have resulted in a program that covers barely half of unemployed workers in Canada today. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Losses
- With recent job losses topping 100,000 and the threat of another 250,000 Canadians being thrown out of work in the coming year, the lack of major EI reforms is the budget's biggest weakness, said economist Armine Yalnizyan of the left-leaning Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

More to be taken off tax rolls

RELIEF In a something-for-everyone budget, the Conservative government has proposed widespread tax relief for small businesses, homeowners, seniors, and low- and middle-income Canadians.

The budget calls for tax measures that will leave more money in more people's pockets, including the sprawling middle class, whose support the Conservatives covet.

The moves will take an additional 265,000 Canadians off the tax rolls altogether, largely through changes to the basic personal income tax exemption and to the seniors' age credit.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

No substance, says Greenpeace spokesperson
"There's a total lack of vision," said Stephen Gilbeault from Greenpeace. "What they're trying to do is talk green and look green, but there's no substance to it." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Federal Budget 2009

It's not easy being green

Critics pan largest environmental stimulus in Canadian history

It was the largest green stimulus in Canadian history, according to the federal Environment minister, but elements of the budget plan that use the environment to revamp the economy fell short of many expectations.

Yesterday's budget contained more than $3 billion to develop clean technologies, build environmentally-sustainable infrastructure and improve energy efficiency in homes.

"The provisions in the budget relating to the environment are very significant," Environment Minister Jim Prentice told Torstar News Service. "When you add all this up, it's certainly the largest green stimulus that we've ever seen."

But critics say the federal government's plans fall far short of national public transit and other infrastructure needs while spending too much taxpayers' money in Alberta's oilsands and not enough on renewable energy.

There were at least two mentions of carbon capture and storage projects that store greenhouse gas emissions underground in a section of the budget that outlines the five-year, $1-billion clean energy fund, noted Stephen Gilbeault of Greenpeace.

The government also earmarked $292 million to help develop the CANDU nuclear reactor and operate the Chalk River facility.

The new clean energy fund is "an excellent start," but it is important to rapidly increase funding for renewable energy projects, both to keep up with the pace that is being set in Washington by U.S. President Barack Obama and to help emerging Canadian companies stay competitive, said Vicky Sharpe, president and chief executive of Sustainable Development Technology Canada.

Obama has vowed to double energy production from renewable sources in three years as part of his stimulus package.

"We're either going to be technology takers or makers, and so if we're going to see an upswing in support for clean technology development in the U.S. then I think we need to be matching that," Sharpe said.

The government wants 90 per cent of energy from clean sources by 2020, a goal that is dependent on shutting down Ontario's coal-fired electricity plants and switching to hydro, nuclear and natural gas as power sources, Prentice said. Wind and solar power can also play a smaller role, he added.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TOM HANSON/REUTERS

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, left, shakes hands with Prime Minister Stephen Harper yesterday after delivering the federal budget in the House of Commons.

Then & now
Jim Flaherty on the Economy

Oct. 7, 2008:
"We had a surplus in the first quarter of this year ... which is, in fact, ahead of track on our budget assumptions. So I'm quite comfortable that we're on track, in fact, a little bit better than on track, for this fiscal year."

Oct. 24, 2008
"I can assure you that we remain on track for a balanced budget this fiscal year with a modest surplus by the end of the fiscal year."

Oct. 27, 2008:
"Canada will be the envy of other industrialized nations."

Nov. 13, 2008
"We won't take steps that will hurt the real economy just for the sake of having a small surplus."

Dec. 11, 2008
"It's quite clear on the basis of the forecasts and the continuing declines in the forecast that there will be a deficit."

Dec. 12, 2008
"We are living in extraordinary times ... Panicking and making the wrong choices would be devastating for the Canadian economy."

Jan. 21, 2009
"We will not create a permanent, long-term deficit for Canada ... In our economic plan, we will show how we will exit from deficit as the economy exits from recession."

Jan. 27, 2009
"As the economy recovers, we fully expect to emerge from deficit and return to surplus within five years ... While our projections are based on the best information available, we cannot guarantee them absolutely."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tories boost spending for less fortunate

PRESSURE The Conservative government was under more political pressure than usual to boost social spending as the would-be coalition was on the lookout for whether it would help those that the economic crisis has left most vulnerable.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty set the tone by making it clear the budget yesterday was not one for a time of prosperity, but one that would do what it could to keep the economy moving while protecting its citizens from the worst effects of the slowdown.

"We will need to spend more to protect our economy and help Canadians hit hardest by the global recession," Flaherty said in his speech in the House of Commons yesterday.

Nicholas Gazzard, executive director of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, said he believes the political crisis had something to do with the social spending included in the budget yesterday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

It's your move, Iggy

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff laid out three tests to determine whether his party will support the budget. Here are the tests and some budget offerings that might satisfy his demands:

Protect the vulnerable

- Extension of employment insurance benefits by five weeks for the next two years.
- Extension of protections to safeguard severance and termination pay for workers hit by company bankruptcies.
- Greater tax relief from the working income tax benefit to encourage low-income Canadians to find and keep jobs.
- Up to $150 in tax savings for low- and middle-income seniors through an increase in age credit amount.
- $1 billion for renovating social housing.

Protect the jobs of today

- $12 billion over two years for new infrastructure spending.
- $7.8 billion in tax relief and funding to stimulate the housing sector and improve housing.
- $170 million toward a "more sustainable and competitive" forestry sector.

Create jobs for tomorrow

- $55 million over two years to help young Canadians find summer jobs, giving them valuable experience in the work force.
- $2 billion to repair, retrofit and expand facilities at post-secondary institutions.
- $750 million for leading-edge research infrastructure through the Canada Foundation for Innovation.
- $110 million to the Canadian Space Agency for more advanced robotics and space technologies.

Did the budget pass Liberal muster? We find out today at 8 a.m. when Ignatieff announces whether his party will support it. Last night, the Liberal leader questioned whether the Conservatives had done enough for the unemployed and whether the infrastructure cash would be spent quickly enough.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Steps added to prop up lending

CREDIT The federal government is bolstering efforts to keep credit flowing in Canada — its starkest acknowledgement to date that consumers and businesses are being increasingly squeezed by the global credit crunch.

The measures, announced in yesterday's federal budget strengthen Ottawa's previous actions to prop up lending by improving access to financing for both households and businesses. Officials said the Extraordinary Financing Framework would provide up to $200 billion to fill gaps in credit markets.

The government is not only fortifying existing programs, it is taking a fresh stab at stemming the crisis through a slew of new actions. Some observers said that the bold approach signals that Canada's credit predicament is now worse than originally imagined.

The $200-billion price tag is a combination of past programs and new endeavours.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

RENOVATIONS The Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC) is designed to get Canadians spending now to help create jobs in industries typically hurt by an economic downturn. Effective today through Jan. 31, 2010, homeowners can claim a tax credit for 15 per cent of renovation expenses between $1,000 and $10,000. The maximum tax credit (on $9,000 in renovations) is worth $1,350.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

New British laws crack down on deadbeat parents
Parents in Britain who refuse to pay child support could have their passports and driver's licences confiscated without a court order under tough new laws. REUTERS

World

World exhaling sigh of relief, Clinton says

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton suggested yesterday the world was breathing a sigh of relief that President Barack Obama had replaced George W. Bush and was working to fix the damage he had caused.

In her first news conference as top U.S. diplomat, Clinton said excitement over the change in power was "reinforced time and time again" during recent welcome calls with foreign counterparts.

"There is a great exhalation of breath going on in the world as people express their appreciation for the new direction that's being set and the team that is put together by the president," Clinton said.

"We have a lot of damage to repair."

Clinton said her remarks should not be viewed as a wholesale repudiation of the Bush administration, adding there would be continuity on some policies.

Many Arab and European allies opposed the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq and its human rights record, including treatment of terror suspects. Generally, world leaders have praised Obama's election but analysts say his honeymoon could be short-lived as he tries to grapple with the global economic crunch, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Arab-Israeli conflict and other challenges. REUTERS

Position on Israel

- Clinton said yesterday that she believes Israel had a right to defend itself and that Palestinian rocket attacks from Gaza on the Jewish state could not go unanswered.

25 bodies found in Madagascar department store

ANTANANARIVO Firefighters found 25 charred bodies in a looted department store in Madagascar's capital yesterday, a day after the worst anti-government violence in years on the island.

Antananarivo's mayor and opposition leader Andry Rajoelina called for peaceful protests against President Marc Ravalomanana to resume today.

On Monday tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets, burning the state-owned television and radio station when protests turned violent. A teenager and a policeman were killed.

Residents said gangs had ransacked shops linked to the president overnight. REUTERS

Georgia **Seeking asylum**

IRAKLI GEDENIDZE/ REUTERS

Alexander Glukhov, a Russian soldier, speaks to journalists at a McDonald's restaurant in Tbilisi. Glukhov said he had deserted from Russian forces in South Ossetia to escape mistreatment, but Moscow said the man had been abducted and demanded his return.

Israeli planes strike Gaza border tunnels: Officials

STRIKES Israeli aircraft struck at tunnels used for smuggling goods and weapons on the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt yesterday, residents of the Gaza town of Rafah, Hamas officials said.

Rafah residents began to flee homes in panic as the aircraft struck three times before dawn, Hamas officials said. There was no initial word of any casualties.

The strike came as an apparent response to an earlier attack by Gaza militants on an Israeli military vehicle hit by a roadside bomb while patrolling the Gaza border, killing one soldier and injuring three.

An air strike later killed one Palestinian, but Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said that it was only an initial reaction and that Israel's full response was still to come, Israeli media reported. REUTERS

News in brief

BULGARIA An armed man surrendered to police after hijacking a bus and holding 37 people aboard hostage for two hours in Bulgaria yesterday. The 33-year-old man, who officials said had mental health problems, had forced the bus driver to stop at a gas station

OCTUPLETS A California woman shocked doctors by giving birth on Monday to octuplets, believed to be only the second set of eight babies born successfully in the U.S. The six boys and two girls were doing well and were in stable condition, doctors said. REUTERS

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Comment

Building in Bob's name

Can we fix it? How about can we afford it?

UsualBusiness

Kate MacNamara
kmacnamara@xplornet.com

In spite of the $40-billion stimulus package he brought down yesterday, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty is not the man of the hour.

Neither is Opposition Leader Michael Ignatieff, on whose shoulders the fate of this borrowed stimulus now rests. Nope.

It isn't even U.S. President Barack Obama as he leans on Washington lawmakers to pass his trillion-dollar spending plan.

The man who defines our time is Bob the Builder, the children's cartoon character.

Governments across the Western world, and now including our own, have stolen the little fella's show: Building houses, roads, bridges, schools, you get the idea.

The Conservatives say they're putting shovels and hammers to work across the country, in order to make work, and lift a flagging economy.

All told new federal infrastructure spending will top $11 billion.

Mr. Flaherty even filched the little guy's tradesman look when he donned steel-toed boots to fulfil the tradition of launching a budget in a pair of new shoes.

In fact, the only thing Mr. Flaherty didn't rip off was Bob's slogan: Can we fix it?

To which his crew of animated bulldozers responds ... Yes we can.

Mr. Obama already filched it for his presidential campaign.

Canada 2009
Federal **Budget**

But all of this "shovel ready" business isn't the only expensive measure in this budget.

There are several billion dollars for retraining the unemployed.

Billions more in tax credits for everything from home renos to computers.

There are income tax reductions and help for small businesses.

Aimed at the very special of special interests is the money to increase slaughterhouse square-footage, and the help for lumber mills to expand their sales in Timbuktu.

There are also more sensible measures to help thaw tightening credit.

For example, there is more than $60 billion available to buy loans from the balance sheets of banks and other lenders.

That might not have much curb appeal, but it may just mean cheaper and more ready mortgages and car loans for consumers.

Canada is well positioned in the face of a looming recession.

We are returning to deficit spending after 12 years of surpluses.

But Mr. Flaherty said yesterday he doesn't expect the government to return to balanced budgets until 2013.

The interceding years, he estimated, would heap a further $85 billion on the national debt.

That leaves the question Bob's pint sized audience can afford to ignore — can we afford it?

Kate MacNamara is a business reporter for CBC radio. She lives in Bragg Creek, Alberta.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

Train cost and inconvenience has reader back to driving

It is ridiculous that we don't have decent rail service between Vancouver and Portland, nevermind just Seattle. I often drive the I-5, but would much rather take a train to see friends, or attend events like Bumbershoot or the Oregon Brewer's Fest. It seems strange that when I want to take the train, I check the schedule, and instead would have to catch a bus operating as Amtrak. Another problem is the price. In North America, especially in Canada, trains are marketed to the public as "scenic," and a form of luxury travel. The cost and inconvenience put me right back in the driver's seat.

DAVE HOLDEN, VANCOUVER

Word on the street: Was this a good budget?

Angela Leggett
Age: 35 Toronto
A: We just moved into a new house so that tax credit (home renovations) will allow me to spend a bit more money.

Mike Hudema
Age: 32
Edmonton
A: $750 million is being put toward false solutions like carbon capture and storage.

Melinda Ainsworth-Roy
Age: 26 Ottawa
A: I'm generally suspicious of the Conservatives ... but from what I've seen so far, it looks hopeful.

Daniel Lemieux
Age: 26
Edmonton
A: I think it's great they're putting some money toward green energy, because fossil fuels are running out.

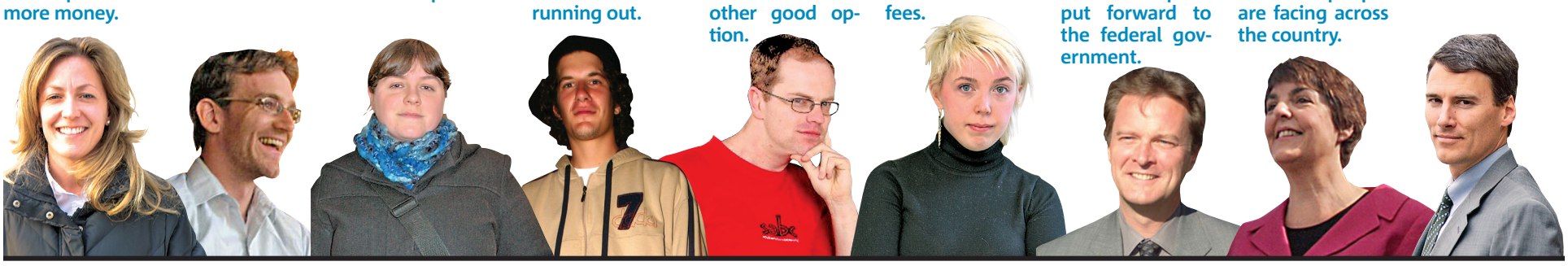
Michael Davis
Age: 35 Calgary
A: It would have been good if the government gave more money for would-be entrepreneurs because I think that's another good option.

Kaley Kennedy
Federation of Students, Nova Scotia
A: We didn't see anything that's going to reduce student debt or reduce tuition fees.

Colin Hansen
Finance Minister
A: I would give this federal budget a thumbs up. It reflects many of the initiatives that Premier Campbell put forward to the federal government.

Carole James
NDP Leader
A: I think (Harper's) finally recognized the challenges that we face economically and the pressures that people are facing across the country.

Gregor Robertson
Vancouver Mayor
A: We were really hoping for social-housing investment to deal with our homeless crisis here.



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Ex-IBM exec heads to Apple after legal battle
A lawsuit involving proprietary- and confidential-information protection that barred former IBM executive Mark Papermaster from joining Apple to lead its iPod and iPhone engineering teams has been resolved. REUTERS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Tax cuts and credit boosts

Canada 2009 Federal Budget

BUDGET Business groups applauded measures in the proposed federal budget to increase access to credit and cut taxes.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty pledged to make up to $200 billion in liquidity and financing available to Canadian businesses through a variety of government measures.

Under the plan, Ottawa would provide businesses with access to additional financing of $13 billion through financial Crown corporations.

Agencies such as the Export Development Corp. and the Business Development Bank of Canada would have greater lending powers.

A portion of these funds, about $5 billion, will be provided through the new business credit availability program.

The government also plans to increase the maximum eligible loan amount a small business can access under the Canada small business financing program for loans made after March 31. The current limit will be raised to $350,000 from $250,000 and to $500,000 for loans made for acquiring property.

The proposed budget also includes tax relief for small business.

As of Jan. 1, 2009, businesses would see their first $500,000 of income taxed at a lower rate — 11 per cent rather than 19 per cent. That's up from the current $400,000.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Inflation risk small: Carney

PAUL MCLEOD
Metro Canada

Canada got some good economic news for a change yesterday at a speech in Halifax.

Mark Carney, governor of the Bank of Canada, told the Halifax Chamber of Commerce that the country will likely avoid massive inflation.

Carney said Canada's banking system is strong and the Bank of Canada has room to manoeuvre on controlling inflation.

"The bank began cutting interest rates sooner — and has cut deeper — than most other central banks. With the usual lag, these moves will have a powerful impact on economic activity and inflation."

"Canada faces those challenges (of the financial crisis) from a position of strength."
Mark Carney

Carney's outlook was downright rosy by recent standards. He expects the economy to begin recovering later this year. While he conceded Canada's GDP will drop a projected 1.2 per cent in 2009, he expects a 3.8 per cent rebound in 2010.

In the meantime, Carney said the central bank would use its powers to keep inflation at two per cent per year.

"While the current financial crisis presents challenges for policy-makers and citizens alike, Canada faces those challenges from a position of strength," said Carney.

Nortel workers ask for severance

PAY A group of about 160 workers recently laid off by ailing telecom equipment maker Nortel Networks Corp. has asked the company to restore the severance payouts it has suspended as it restructures under court protection.

The group appealed to Nortel's chief executive and its board of directors to overturn its decision to suspend promised severance "and, in so doing, uphold your stated commitment to the highest standards of business conduct and integrity." REUTERS

Business in brief

EARNINGS Helped by strong sales in Quebec and improved performance in Ontario outlets, grocer Metro Inc. reported a quarterly profit of $81.1 million, or 76 cents a share, up from $73.8 million, or 54 cents a share, a year earlier. Analysts had expected earnings of 64 cents a share.

PROFIT Hershey Co. posted higher-than-expected quarterly profits of $82.2 million US, up from $54.3 million US a year earlier. It lifted sales of its Hershey's and Reese's brands through increased marketing in the hopes of gaining market share. Sales rose 2.6 per cent to $1.38 billion US. REUTERS

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Stopping cancer where it starts:

Do recently-discovered cancer stem cells hold the key?

Wednesday, February 4, 2009, 5:30 p.m.
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Join us for lively discussions, debates and refreshments.

This free event is presented by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and its Institute of Cancer Research.

The age of stem cell research has offered up a new hope in the fight against cancer. There is mounting evidence that altered stem cells within some types of tumours are at the origin of tumour growth and the cause of relapse and spread of the disease. This discovery has raised the possibility of developing new treatments that attack cancer at its very roots. Other researchers are proposing to use stem cells from the blood of donated umbilical cords to develop anti-cancer treatments for breast cancer and leukemia. But researchers do not yet fully understand how cancer stem cells operate, and potential treatments that specifically target and use these cells could be years away.

Experts:

Benjamin G. Neel
MD, PhD
Director, Ontario Cancer Institute, Senior Scientist Division of Stem Cell and Developmental Biology

Thea D. Tlsty
PhD
Professor of Pathology and Co-Leader at the Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of California, San Francisco

Connie J. Eaves
PhD
Director Terry Fox Laboratory Professor Medical Genetics University of British Columbia

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Canada

MLS commissioner chimes in on Beckham

Major League Soccer isn't prepared to wave goodbye to David Beckham just yet, but would be willing to discuss the future of the former English captain with Italian club AC Milan, commissioner Don Garber said in Ottawa yesterday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Heat forces Djokovic out

The Melbourne heat forced Novak Djokovic to throw in the towel during his Australian Open quarter-final match against Andy Roddick yesterday. The third-ranked Serb looked increasingly woozy and had to give up while trailing 6-7 (3), 6-4, 6-2, 2-1, allowing Roddick to claim a spot in the semifinals against Roger Federer.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Predators pay a visit

Tonight

VS

7:30 p.m.,
TSN/TEAM 1040

The Canucks go looking for the season sweep of the Predators tonight at the Garage, as both clubs play their first game since the All Star break. Vancouver has outscored Nashville 9-2 in three victories this season, with Kyle Wellwood picking up a team-high three points in the wins. The Canucks have won six straight against the Preds overall.

HAPPY CAMPER? As of tonight, Mats Sundin will have been in a Canucks uniform for exactly three weeks – the length of an NHL training camp. He'll get a chance to show the rust has worn off on a line with Wellwood and Mason Raymond, as Pavol Demitra is press-box bound with a groin strain.

NO-FFENCE IN NASHVILLE: The Preds have scored the least goals in the West (111), and finding the back of the net has been even tougher of late. Nashville has just 24 goals in its last 12 games, going 3-9-0 during the dry spell.

STAR GAZING: The Preds' Shea Weber has been tabbed as a leading candidate for the Norris Trophy, awarded annually to the league's top defenseman. The Sicamous, B.C., native tops all NHL blue liners with 14 goals so far this season.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports in brief

CFL The Lions re-signed slotback Geroy Simon to a contract extension yesterday. The deal will keep him with the CFL club through the 2011 season. Simon caught 609 catches for 10,262 yards in his past eight seasons, all with B.C. During the past six seasons, Simon has averaged 91 catches and 1,554 yards. "I am very, very happy to be extending my contract with the Lions," Simon said. "I love this city, I love this team and I want to do nothing short of winning championships for our fans."

CFL Buck Pierce, not Jarious Jackson, will be the Lions' No. 1 quarterback next season, general manager/head coach Wally Buono has declared. Pierce shared time with Jackson at QB last season.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

A Steeler cakewalk?

On paper, the Super Bowl looks like a mismatch

NFL
Super Bowl
XLIII

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

I am a football addict and have not missed a Super Bowl game. Never. I have, I confess, witnessed every single second of all 42 Super Bowls — whether as a tot in my parents' family room, at friends' parties, in the stands of the stadiums where some of the games were played, working in the press box at several, in a rowdy establishment slouching over a table with beer, or alone with popcorn in the privacy of my den.

And, naturally, I'll watch the 43rd Super Bowl somewhere this Sunday, when the Pittsburgh Steelers and Arizona Cardinals clash helmets.

I'm not especially jazzed up about this one, however, and I know I'm not alone.

Last year in Arizona, when the heavily favoured New England Patriots were supposed to shred the New York Giants in the 42nd Super Bowl, scalpers exploited overwhelming fan interest and sold tickets for beyond $10,000 apiece. This week, I'm told, you can buy the finest Super Bowl seat in the house in Tampa Bay for less than $3,000.

The recession is partly responsible, unquestionably, but there's general apathy, too, as many football fanatics fear a major mismatch.

Oh, I know that's what folks said last year, before the Pats and the Giants met. New England, though, created a buzz because of the undefeated/historical season it aimed to record. And then the Giants went and upset them. And, sure, the Cards could defy logic as seven-point underdogs and could pull off another miracle Sunday.

They could, but they won't. Consider:

• Team histories: Pittsburgh has a rich, winning tradition and can garner a record sixth Super Bowl victory Sunday. "I knew when I got drafted I'd be in the playoff hunt every year," Pittsburgh defensive end Brett Keisel said. "We ooze success." Arizona, meanwhile, has never been in a Super Bowl and has qualified for the playoffs only three times since 1976.

• Defences: No Super Bowl team had permitted more than 360 points in a season until these Cards, who coughed up 426. Pittsburgh gave up 223 points and led the NFL in fewest yards allowed.

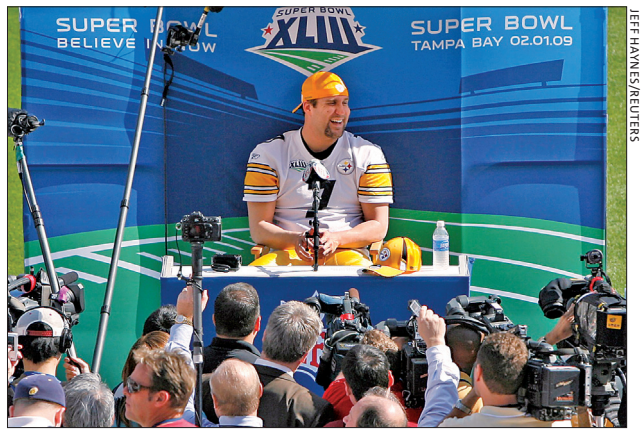
• Regular-season scores: The most points Pittsburgh surrendered in a game this season were 21 — in a 26-21 triumph. Arizona was beaten twice by 21 points, once by 28 and once by 40. No previous Super Bowl team lost a game by 21 or more points in the regular schedule.

You get the picture. This could be one of those not-so-classic Super Bowl routs.

Like: Pittsburgh 28, Arizona 9.

Yep, that bad. Regardless, I'll watch every second. Don't plan to snap my streak just yet.

Marty York has been a groundbreaking sports columnist and broadcaster in Canada for decades.



JEFF HAYNES/REUTERS

Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger answers questions during Super Bowl media day in Tampa yesterday.

Even split on fighting issue

NHL A slight majority of Canadians believe NHL hockey fights should be banished for good, according to a new Canadian Press-Harris-Decima poll. A survey conducted during NHL all-star weekend shows that 54 per cent of respondents think fighting should be eliminated. The poll suggests only 40 per cent of Canadians believe fighting should continue to be allowed.

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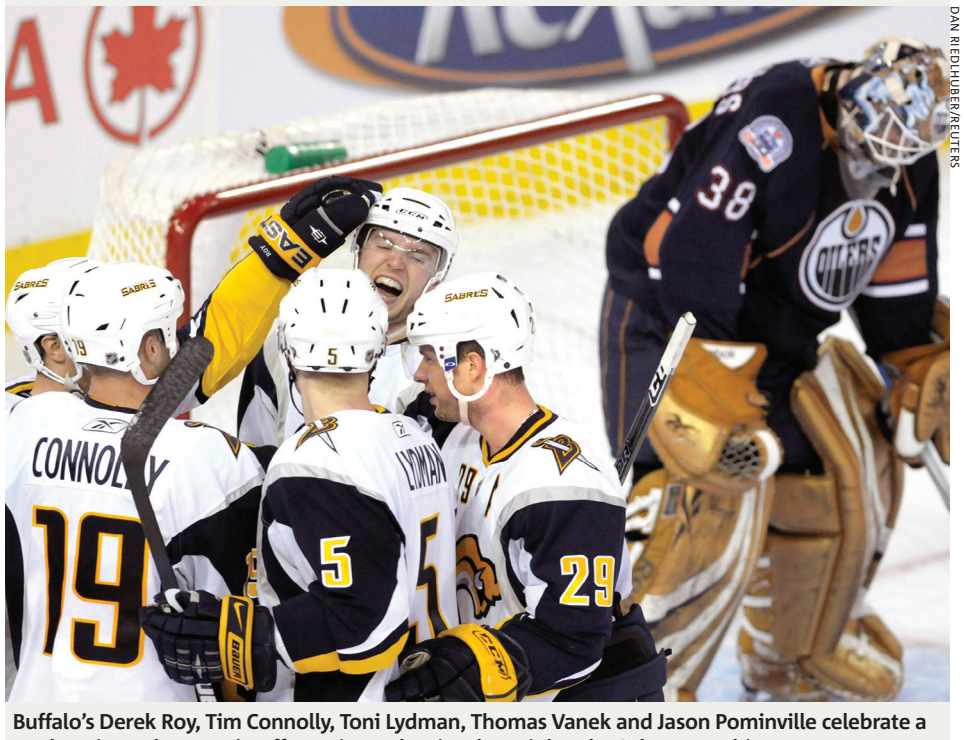
NHL Oilers stampeded by Buffalo



DAN RIEDLHUBER/REUTERS

Buffalo's Derek Roy, Tim Connolly, Toni Lydman, Thomas Vanek and Jason Pominville celebrate a goal against Edmonton's Jeff Drouin-Deslauriers last night. The Sabres won big, 10-2.

Metro Workology exclusive: Curtain Call
Don't miss Curtain Call, Metro's exclusive feature series in the Workology section. In the realm of death there are some interesting, lucrative and mysterious career opportunities; we will be digging up the stories for you, so check for Workology on Mondays and Wednesdays and Metronews.ca/work as well.

Workology

Practically essential

According to a new poll conducted for Polytechnics Canada, 91 per cent of Canadians believe that practical training is more important than theoretical education in getting laid-off workers back into the job market.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Green burials coming?

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Curtain Call

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

Modern burial practices are a relatively new concept considering our ancestors once buried the dead in an incredibly natural fashion.

Imagine a traditional North American burial and you're likely to think of everything from a thick, lacquered casket to a heavy tombstone. In reality, however, this form of interment is a relatively new concept considering our ancestors once buried the dead in an incredibly natural fashion.

Following this idea of returning a body to the earth in its most pure form, natural or green burials have become increasingly popular in both Canada and The United States after enjoying great success in The United Kingdom.

Royal Oak Burial Park in Victoria B.C. is the province's largest municipal cemetery and the first in Canada to have opened a natural burial site. Stephen Olson, the executive director of Royal Oak explains that after being approached by local citizens who desired natural burials, in 2006 the cemetery made a commitment to the community to open a site in the next two years.

Olson says the feedback he received to the decision was astounding.

"As soon as we were definitely going ahead with this, the amount of interest and amount of calls I got from local people was incredible. I've never seen anything like that in this business," he says. "For people, the environment and the ecology and their awareness of them has increased exponentially over the past few years."

The natural interment zone, known as the Woodlands, officially opened in October 2008 and holds space for 255 graves sites on a third of an acre. Though specific green burial methods may vary depending on the region, the common goal is to let the body decompose naturally.

At Woodlands, bodies are not treated with harsh embalming chemicals and are wrapped in natural fabric. The bodies are then placed in a biodegradable container that could be made out of materials such as wicker or sustainable wood. After the body is buried without a grave liner, there are no markers or other items allowed directly on the grave. Instead inscriptions will be made on five large memorial boulders that are located around the Woodlands periphery.

"What we're trying to do here is essentially match the ecosystem with where the burial plots are located," says Olson, who adds that plant species native to Victoria will be used to help re-forest the Woodlands site.

Mike Salisbury, the executive director of the Natural Burial Co-operative in Canada, envisions that by following a green burial model, the cemeteries of the future will actually resemble lush forests and family-friendly parks.

Since Salisbury says more people in Ontario are interested in pursuing this type of burial, the cooperative is currently working to obtain land in the province for a green site.

"What this is for people is a sense of value. They look at the conventional process and options and they don't see value in them," says Salisbury. "The whole circle of life thing is really what people get. There's something that feels good about allowing the circle to complete, and reaching a logical end."

Health care sector still healthy

EMPLOYMENT While the recession injured many industries in 2008, health care was one of the few bright spots in the employment picture. The large aging population has health-care employers in need of qualified workers and therefore, despite the current economic conditions, health-care employers will continue to increase staff in 2009, according to CareerBuilder.com's annual health care hiring forecast.

Close to one-in-five (17 per cent) of large health-care employers (50 or more employees) plan to increase the number of full-time, permanent employees in 2009, while 67 per cent foresee either making no change in the number of employees or are unsure. Sixteen per cent plan to decrease the number of employees.

"The health-care industry continues to boast high demand for qualified workers. Employers are reacting to this need by continuing strong recruiting efforts this year," said Jason Ferrara, vice-president of corporate marketing for CareerBuilder.com. "Half of health-care employers, the highest among industries we surveyed, have open positions for which they can't find qualified candidates. In response, health-care employers will have to adjust their recruitment and retention strategies to find and keep top talent."

FLEXIBILITY TREND

Flexible work options continue to be an important benefit for health-care employers to provide in an effort to attract new candidates and to prevent employee burnout. More than two-in-five (41 per cent) of health-care employers will provide more flexible work arrangements for employees in 2009, including:

- **ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULES:** Come in early and leave early or come in later and leave later, 72 per cent;
- **COMPRESSED WORK WEEKS:** Work the same hours, but in fewer days, 52 per cent;
- **TELECOMMUTING:** 41 per cent;
- **JOB SHARING:** 17 per cent;
- **SUMMER HOURS:** Eight per cent. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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BCIT recruitment portal asks "what would you change?"
The British Columbia Institute of Technology has a new interactive microsite. Set up like a social networking site, whatwouldyouchange.ca members can upload photos and manipulate them to illustrate what kind of changes they'd like to see. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Leave the boss out of it

• Be careful if you are going to criticize your boss. In a B.C. decision, the court confirmed that employees "are generally entitled to criticize their superiors." However, when such criticism goes over the edge, the employer is not required to tolerate it.

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2008 was tough for employees

WorkplaceLaw

Daniel Lublin
dan@canadaemploymentlawyer.com

Most people believe that court decisions are too pro-employee. This is untrue. Despite employee-friendly workplace laws, Canadian employers sometimes get to call all the legal shots. See these recent decisions:

• Fired employees may have to return to their old jobs. Refusing to return to his work months after he was dismissed, Teamsters business agent Douglas Evans was accused of failing to avoid further losses, as dismissed employees have an obligation to take all reasonable steps to find another job after having been fired. Until 2008, this obligation stopped short of requiring an employee to return to his or her former job. But in light of the Supreme Court's decision in Evans, this may now be exactly what is required.

• The point of "undue hardship" in accommodating an employee's disability at work has been rewritten. In Hydro Quebec, the Supreme Court ruled that a large organization, such as Hydro Quebec, was not required to create a new position in order to accommodate an absence-prone employee's particular illness. Accommodation does not require the employer to alter the essence of the contract, which is that the employee must perform his or her job, the Court wrote. Instead, if the proper operation of its business would be especially restricted, employers can fire disabled employees without infringing the human rights laws.

• Drug and alcohol use may no longer constitute a "disability" under human rights legislation, meaning that employers might not be required to accommodate employees with an alcohol or drug dependency. In an Alberta appellate decision, the court upheld an employer's right to perform mandatory pre-employment alcohol and drug screening tests.

• Resign with notice and don't take customer lists with you. In the RBC case, the Supreme Court found that a group of employees who organized a mass departure that essentially crippled their employer's office had no duty to compete fairly with their former employer. But not so fast. Even without the benefit of a non-solicit or non-compete agreement, employees must perform in good faith while still employed.

Daniel A. Lublin is an employment lawyer focusing on the law of dismissal; dan@canadaemploymentlawyer.com.

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Catching them by loops and curls

Curtain Call

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

For Dr. Atul Singla, a Phd in forensic document examination, the toughest part of his job is convincing people it's real.

"We have to convince the laypersons that it's not just guesswork; it's a science and it's based on scientific principles just like the other sciences," he said from his Scarborough office.

The handwriting identification expert, born in the Patiala District of Punjab, India, has practised the science for the past 25 years, mostly in his home country.

He moved his business, Worldwide Forensic Services Inc., to Canada in 2005.

Unlike other industries, his business is booming and one of his clients even suggested it might grow as a result of the enduring recession.

"She said, 'Dr. Singla, you're going to be busy,' and she said, 'you'll see, because of the recession there will be more forgeries and frauds,'" the soft-spoken doctor said with a chuckle.

"I'm not sure," he said. "And I don't want people making frauds or forgeries — not for my sake."

While most of his work revolves around civil cases or insurance claims, he has been called upon to help solve murder, assault and sexual assault cases.

In any case, he said, the work is time consuming and meticulous.

"We have to examine the minute details such as writing pressure and the angle of the writing and shading," he said.

There are many factors the handwriting identification expert must take into consideration when comparing signatures or writing, he said.

"The range of variation due to the environment and external factors such as the age of the writer, their writing position, writing instrument, health conditions of the writer and alcohol consumption," he said.

A second challenge in his work is convincing clients that real-life document examination is different from how it's portrayed on popular crime shows like CSI.

"I don't want people making frauds or forgeries — not for my sake."
Dr. Atul Singla on the suggestion forgeries will increase with the recession

"They say, 'Oh I've seen it in CSI, it's so easy and why are you taking so much time and why are you asking for more specimens of writing and so many signatures?'" he said.

"We have to tell them this is not CSI."

Singla knew from the age of eight, after devouring dozens of Sherlock Holmes novels, he wanted to be a forensic scientist.

He studied the discipline at Punjabi University, went on to do his master's in forensics and finally, completed his doctorate with a specialization in the effect of heredity and environment on handwriting.

He said he's likely one of the only handwriting analysis experts in the country with a doctorate because Canada's highest formal recognition in forensics is a bachelor's degree.

Singla says business is good because there aren't many others in the city, or even the country, with his qualifications.

Nonetheless, the affable doctor loves his job and plans to stick with it.

He says he feels rewarded for his work every time it leads to justice, especially when a disadvantaged person has been well served.

"I'm so happy at that time," he said.

Uncertain future?

- With advancements in technology and the paperless office, Dr. Atul Singla doesn't expect there will be many future openings in his field.

For more of the Curtain Call exclusive series check the Workology section Mondays and Wednesdays or stop by Metronews.ca/work for the entire series.

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Top presidential retreats

AskMen.com's list of the top 10 U.S. presidential retreats is, unsurprisingly, led by Camp David in Maryland and the Kennedy Compound in Massachusetts; other spots include the Little White House in Key West, Fla.; Lyndon Johnson's Texas ranch; and the Reagan family's Rancho del Cielo near Santa Barbara, Calif. **REUTERS**

Travel

Family ski deal

Fairmont Hot Springs Resort in Fairmont, B.C. has launched a Family Learn to Ski Package that combines ski lessons, a snowshoe chocolate fondue, soaking in its natural mineral hot springs and more. The package is suited to a family of four (two adults and two youth or children) that's new to skiing or boarding and wants to enjoy a worry-free learning experience. Visit fairmonthotsprings.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

TRAVELDESK@METRONEWS.CA

Two tales of the Riviera Nayarit

On Mexico's Pacific Coast, you can live the high life or go off-grid

DENISE BALKISSOON
for Metro Canada

The term "snow squall" is now in regular rotation on the weather report and just about every Canadian is ready to jump on a flight south. But while the desire for more degrees Celsius is widespread, winter travellers have many differences.

Some nine-to-fivers just want a week on the beach, period: This type of vacationer considers doing absolutely nothing the best antidote to the daily grind. Others are trying to inject some adventure and new experiences into a life made grey by routine.

Either way, the stretch of ocean dubbed the Riviera Nayarit offers enticements to every sort of sun worshipper.

Nayarit is a small province in central Mexico, just below the Tropic of Cancer. The southern point of its coastal region is Puerto Vallarta, legendary as a vacation spot ever since Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton made it their love nest in the 1960s.

Once tiny, Puerto Vallarta is now a bustling tourist hot spot, sometimes tacky, sometimes fabulous, full of little art galleries worth an afternoon's perusal. For those wanting something more chilled out, head 20 minutes north of the airport to Nuevo Vallarta, where a strip of hotels caters to the weary beach bum. Most of these are full-service resorts, but keep in mind that every all-inclusive is not created equal. Even if your holiday itinerary reads only "beach, buffet, beer, repeat," you don't want to spend your precious week eating hotdogs on a poorly kept beach.

Check out Riu Palace Pacifico, the latest Mexican mega-resort opened by the Spanish hotel chain. My cohort and I spent four days here indulging our laziest selves. After sleeping through the morning, we'd enjoy chilaquiles at the buffet, an awesome local breakfast of fried tortilla bits, beans, tomatoes and cheese.

Next, it was time to tan, jump into the ocean for a bit and then wile away the afternoon in the pool sipping Red Eyes (a surprisingly delicious blend of Clamato juice and beer). With a total of 110 hotels worldwide, Riu has the resort game down to a science.

Although busy, the Pacifico always feels spacious, with enough lounge chairs, bartenders and à la carte restaurant seats to keep all the guests in the 445 rooms happy. One nice aspect of visiting a resort here (as opposed to an all-inclusive in a country like Cuba or the Dominican Republic) is the chance to mingle with Mexican vacationers.

I lost an embarrassingly bad game of ping-pong to Bernard, a dad from Guadalajara who had made the three-hour drive west to spend a long weekend by the beach with his family. Despite its cushy trappings, the Palace is definitely a family spot, with kids chattering in rapidfire Spanish holding raucous relay races in the humongous pool. Come dark, the children disappear and grownups learn salsa in the flashy lavender ballroom that evokes a Mexican Moulin Rouge.

"Even if your holiday itinerary reads only 'beach, buffet, beer, repeat,' you don't want to spend your precious week eating hotdogs on a poorly kept beach."

STEVE JENKINSON/FOR METRO CANADA

At Stoners Surf Camp, a low-key hostel and restaurant in San Blas, the affordable overnight rates include the use of charming, rickety old bikes.

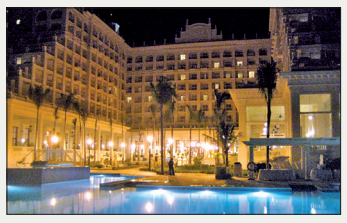
After half a week of not lifting a finger, it was time for us to slip into backpacker mode. A three-hour drive through winding roads overhung with lush leaves brought us to the northern tip of Riviera Nayarit. Here, in a wee fishing town known as San Blas, our next four days had an entirely different rhythm.

At 8 a.m., we'd have the ocean to ourselves, so he'd practise surfing and I'd take a long swim. Next, a quick bike ride down the road to pick up a breakfast of piping hot banana bread. Ten more minutes of pedalling brought us to the boys peddling Jungle Boat rides through the mangrove swamp, a steamy paradise where blue herons and anhingas fly overhead and vibrant pink orchids sprout from fallen trees; after hunching quietly in our boat for almost an hour, we finally saw a few alligators, too. Satisfied, we'd be ready for lunch at one of the many amazing taquerias, where handmade corn tortillas filled with a pile of meat and toppings cost 15 pesos (about $1.50), max.

Our home base in San Blas was Stoners Surf Camp, a low-key hostel and restaurant run by a former Mexican longboard champion. A cabana with a double bed was just 200 pesos a night (including the use of charming, rickety old bikes). Sleeping just 15 feet from the crashing waves made afternoon siestas especially romantic, and we had front row seats when the local surfers hit the waves just before dusk.

We'd watch them show off their skills, then bike into town to grab dinner and avoid the swarms of tiny mosquitos that appear as the sun sets. The main plaza was good for an hour or two of people watching, its trees full of invisible birds that squawk incessantly at all hours. Since the sidewalks roll up pretty early here, by 10 p.m. we'd be back in our secluded beach hut.

Would I rather have been welcoming the dawn with the partying revellers at the Riu Palace? I'm just glad I got to fit in both.



STEVE JENKINSON/FOR METRO CANADA

Riviera Nayarit

- Riu Palace Pacifico (above), double suites including meals and drinks for two, from $1,800 a week; riu.com.
- Stoners Surf Camp, two-person cabanas from 150 pesos a night; stonerssurfcamp.com.
- Pan de Plantano Juan Banana, 219 Calle Canalizo Sur, San Blas. Fresh banana bread daily, 40 pesos a loaf.
- La Parrillada, west end of the main plaza, San Blas. Tacos from 10 pesos. Try the asada (steak) and camarones (shrimp), and pile on all six sauces and toppings.
- Mike McDonald, 75 Avenida Benito Juarez, San Blas. A nice restaurant for a sit-down meal. Try the pollo mole (chicken mole) enchiladas.

DENISE BALKISSOON/ FOR METRO CANADA

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JULIA DIMON/FOR METRO CANADA

Andy Concio, owner of a balut factory near of Manila, explains the process of balut fertilization.

Sampling a surprising snack

A traveller who makes a point of eating local delicacies may have finally met her match

TheTravelJunkie

Balut is a nutrient-rich snack, an exotic delicacy and a challenge that could unsettle even the most daring of Fear Factor contestants.

It's a dish widely enjoyed in the Philippines and other parts of South East Asia and at first glance, it seems a lot like a hard-boiled egg. The only difference is that when you inspect the contents, you find the yolk is actually an 18-day-old fertilized duck embryo.

Balut has been described as a snack that's as common in Filipino culture as hot dogs are in the U.S. It's most commonly eaten in the early evening with lots of salt and a nice cold beer.

On the streets of Manila, you'll find vendors on every corner selling warm eggs to hungry passersby. Just crack the egg open, peel the shell and add a pinch of sodium. Some eat the snack with a fork, though the usual way to scarf it down is with your bare hands.

Balut is valued as a good calcium hit, a cheap source of protein and a potent aphrodisiac. Countless people also love the taste, but to the uninitiated, the experience can seem not so much gourmet as just plain gross.

The U.S.-based satirical site Cracked.com voted balut one of the "most terrifying foods in the world," and relates that balut is enjoyed in Cambodia, the Philippines and the fifth and seventh levels of hell.

When travelling, I like to keep an open mind and eat as the locals do, even if that means taking culinary challenges to the extreme. So I head to Pateros — a district 20 minutes outside of central Manila that's known as the balut capital of the Philippines — to try the thing for myself.

I visit a locally-owned balut factory where they process about 80,000 eggs a week. Half are sold as balut and the other half as salted eggs. The owner, Andy Concio, takes me through the factory and explains that thousands of eggs are incubated in wooden chambers and heated at just the right temperature. The process of fertilization is regularly monitored using a device that looks like a pinhole camera.

He puts an egg under the light of a naked bulb and inspects it carefully. "The dark shape sloshing around in the egg means the embryo is forming," he says. "If the light doesn't show the veiny liquid, the egg is infertile and cannot be used for balut."

Concio claims to be the first to preserve the product and export it as a non-perishable food item. His main customers are Filipino migrant workers living and working in Dubai, but his base is growing.

He plans to ship the product to the U.S., making it available to millions of South Asian ex-pats who miss their salty snack.

So what does balut taste like? I pick at an eggshell, then take a shot of the fluid inside. The liquid is warm and tastes like green tea. But the rest of the contents are not so soothing. They remind me of dry, mealy turkey, the sort that's been hanging around much too long after Thanksgiving dinner.

I'm happy I tried balut — and plan to keep trying local dishes wherever I go — but I still feel a bit tongue-traumatized. And I may never be able to look at an egg the same way again.

Julia Dimon is co-host of Word Travels, airing Sundays at 8:30 p.m. on OLN; juliadimon.com.

Word Travels

• Catch the second season of Word Travels, a documentary series that follows the real-life adventures of travel writers Julia Dimon and Robin Esrock. It airs Sundays at 5:30 p.m. on OLN, with a repeat at 8:30 p.m.

NICKY LOH/REUTERS

Waitresses dressed as flight attendants serve customers inside the A380 In-flight Kitchen, a restaurant in Taipei named after the giant Airbus airliner.

Eating an in-flight meal at zero altitude

Imagine boarding a plane without security checks or even tickets and more importantly, there's more than just fish or chicken for dinner.

Set in a dull commercial building in central Taipei, the A380 In-Flight Kitchen looks and functions like an airline in many ways, expect that it serves a regular restaurant menu of Western food, sometimes in plastic trays.

Since November, the restaurant has been packing in wannabe passengers, who sit in soft speckled blue seats with headrests covered in white napkins and under oval-shaped windows. Locked white baggage compartments hang overhead.

Waitresses dressed as flight attendants take meal orders for filet mignon or waffles, as well as the customary fish and chicken. Staff say "welcome aboard" to customers and issue boarding passes to those who must wait for a table.

Of the 84 seats, 20 are "first class" or set aside for groups with advanced bookings, and the place is often overbooked, said business operations manager Emily Lu. "There are customers who come in and say 'Is this real airline food? Airline food doesn't taste good,'" Lu said, adding that they had turned a profit.

The restaurant, in Taipei's university quarter, opened after owner Yang Mao-hui figured that he could ride some of the Airbus A380's recent fame in the aviation industry by offering a simulated experience, Lu said.

"The kids like flying, so coming here gives them that experience," said regular customer Wu Shu-hua, 44. "It looks exactly like an airplane, but the food should be a bit more extensive here," added first-time lunch customer Vivian Mo, 14, who had just ordered a soup and salad.

The Airbus A380 is billed as the most spacious passenger aircraft in the world. Airbus has no actual stake in the restaurant, Lu said.

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Metro Drive

Taking Dakar on diesel

Volkswagen has become the first automobile manufacturer to win the Dakar Rally with a diesel-powered vehicle, with its Race Touareg TDIs taking first and second place, Canadian Driver reports. The prestigious endurance race took place in Argentina and Chile. METRO MEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

Think beyond family car

Canadian, American inspirations behind Toyota Venza

JIM ROBINSON
for Metro Canada

Toyota says the 2009 Venza will be available with a four-cylinder or V6 engine and front- or all-wheel-drive starting at "under $30,000."

These are the centre stack controls for the 2009 Venza. Note the cupholder that slides back and forward.

2009 Toyota Venza

Type: Five-passenger wagon
Price: Not available
Engine: 2.7-litre, four-cylinder, 16-valve DOHC; 3.5-litre DOHC V6
HP: 182-268

Highlights

- Slick looks
- Lots of room

Toyota calls the 2009 Venza the most North American car it has ever built.

And in the next breath officials also call it one of the most important cars in the company's history.

Well, when you already have Corolla, Camry and Matrix, then a lot has to be riding on this next vehicle.

At the launch of the 2009 Venza in the hills of Pennsylvania, Toyota opened the presentation by declaring the Venza as a whole new kind of family car that isn't really a family car. It's hard to put a label on Venza. It blurs the line between station wagon, crossover and luxury car. About the closest thing to it in concept is the Mercedes-Benz R-Class. With a price said to start at under $30,000, I guess you could think of it as R-Class light.

This is the first Toyota vehicle specifically aimed at North Americans, designed in California and built in Kentucky. Canadians were the inspiration for the side rocker panels that are covered by the door panel to keep out slush and snow. Because the rockers are at nearly the level of the floor, there is no step over to get in. So when you get in and out in the winter, and your pant legs brush the sill, they won't get wet or muddy.

The 60/40 rear seats can be folded to create an almost flat cargo floor with one touch.

With a length of 4.8 m, the wheelbase is a full 2,775 mm larger, which makes for sizeable passenger volume. To lower the roof as much as possible while retaining enough headroom for stadium-style second row seating, Toyota stylists came up with the clever idea of minimizing gaps.

The bonus is Venza looks very slick. By adding in 19- and 20-inch alloy wheels on the four-cylinder and V6 models respectively, the Venza comes across as a concept car that made it to the street.

The interior is outstanding in its little details. There is a power point on the transmission wall with a cubbie just below for the front passenger. The 60/40 rear seat has a one-touch fold-down lever. That is in addition to remote back seat releases grafted into each rear cargo wall. The back seats recline for extra comfort.

Another thing I found was a character line across the dash running into each front door where it then widens and creates a recess that is also an armrest.

Fuel numbers for the four-cylinder FWD are 10.0/6.8/8.5L/100 km city/highway/combined respectively. For the AWD, they are: 10.2/7.1/8.8L/100 km. For the V6 FWD/AWD they are 11.0/7.6/9.5L/100 km and 11.5/7.9/9.9L/100 km city/highway/combined.

It looks like in trying to create the next generation North American car, Toyota has sensed an emerging trend and is ready to move on it.

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Saved by auto brakes? Thank your lucky lasers

AutoPilot

Michael Goetz
Veteran auto journalist

The last time I was so impressed with lasers it was 1977, and the Blue Oyster Cult were on stage at the Kitchener-Waterloo Auditorium. We heard their laser show was legendary, but to see it in person, and under such loud circumstances, was, well, heavy man. It made my centre-parted hair stand on end.

Fast forward to October 2008 and I'm driving a 2010 Volvo XC60, at its world launch in Valencia, Spain. One of Volvo's safety engineers is in the passenger seat going over the drill: maintain a speed of 25 km/hr; drive straight into that big balloon (which is shaped like a car); don't touch the brakes.

It's a weird feeling to intentionally drive straight into an object, however fluffy it might look. But I manage to not brake and with the backside of the balloon car looming large, some brain inside the XC60 suddenly brakes for me. The XC60 stutters to an ABS-enabled stop. No damage to persons or property.

"It's a weird feeling to intentionally drive straight into an object, however fluffy it might look. But I manage to not brake ... some brain inside the (Volvo) XC60 suddenly brakes for me."

Sometimes it's hard to get excited about safety (hey Bob, come over and check out this thing's crumple zone!), but this system is pretty cool. Volvo calls it City Safety, and it is their response to two surprising statistics: 75 per cent of all reported collisions take place at speeds up to 30 km/hr; in 50 per cent of those collisions, the driver does not brake at all, mainly because he or she is distracted.

A laser sensor integrated into the windshield (near the rear-view mirror), detects vehicles and other objects up to 10 metres in front of the XC60's front bumper. The system does loads of math to see if there will be an impact if the driver continues to be MIA. At that point, it will do what it did during our simulated adventure: Engage the brakes, shut down the throttle, flash the brake lights.

Even if it can't avoid a collision, it will do its thing to reduce the force of the collision.

Insurance companies are super interested in City Safety, for obvious reasons, and are planning to offer discounts to XC60 owners.

As good as this thing is, it's obviously not supposed to relieve the driver of his or her responsibility for maintaining a safe distance — or for staying focused on the task at hand. That goes for the passengers too; in my books there's nothing like a good front-seat screamer to keep the driver honest.

That said, Volvo engineers called this new crossover, "probably the safest car in the world … for sure the safest Volvo we've ever built."

They have lasers to thank for much of that, and I'm not surprised. Those darn things are so versatile.

Michael Goetz has been writing about cars and editing automotive publications for more than 20 years. He lives in Toronto with his family and a neglected 1967 Jaguar E-type.

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McCartney to headline yogic flying benefit

Paul McCartney is going to headline a concert to raise money for yogic flying. Film director David Lynch is organizing the benefit in New York on April 4 — which will also star Moby, Sheryl Crow, and Eddie Vedder — and is determined to raise money to teach the technique to school children. **FEMALETFIRST.CO.UK**

Entertainment

New Heights

Jennifer Lopez is reported to be starring in a Broadway musical. The singer-and-actress is considering a role in the New York theatre production of In the Heights. FEMALETFIRST.CO.UK

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Milk among GLAAD nominees

AWARDS Best picture Oscar nominee Milk picked up another award nod yesterday as the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation announced nominations for its 20th annual GLAAD Media Awards.

Milk, from Focus Features, the specialty division of Universal Pictures, was included in GLAAD's outstanding film in wide release category. It will compete with Miramax's Brideshead Revisited, Columbia's Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist, Warner Bros.' RocknRolla and the Weinstein Co.'s Vicky Cristina Barcelona.

REUTERS

Runway blunder

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Camille Prins went on Project Runway Canada to follow her design dreams, but a frumpy camouflage dress got her sent home in this season's first episode.

On the season premiere last night, designers were tasked with creating a winning dress — using camouflage material — to be displayed in the Canadian War Museum.

Prins, a 28-year-old Toronto native, tried to capture the spirit of a jungle vixen with her dress but the judges felt it just made the model look dirty and unkempt. One judge said it was actually painful to look at, sealing Prins' fate.

On the show, Prins said her most powerful asset was her positivity and she remains true to form despite being ousted. "The show was actually a really fun, positive experience. I feel like it has already opened a lot of doors."

Prins had only kind words for the other designers and says most of them bonded because of similar goals and personalities.

Previously, two contestants voluntarily withdrew from the competition in dramatic exits due to health issues. Jaclyn Murray, 26, from Winnipeg, Man., suffered an anxiety attack during the first challenge and had to be hospitalized, choosing to withdraw shortly thereafter.

Danio Frangella, 33, from LaSalle, Ont., left the show after developing painful skin ulcers, a side-effect from a bout with cancer.

For Prins, the experience of being on the show was a lot tamer and a lot less intimidating than she had expected.

"I expected it to be a hundred times crazier. Even when I was sleeping I was expecting a camera crew to rush in. But you're too busy to even notice that the cameras are there," she said.

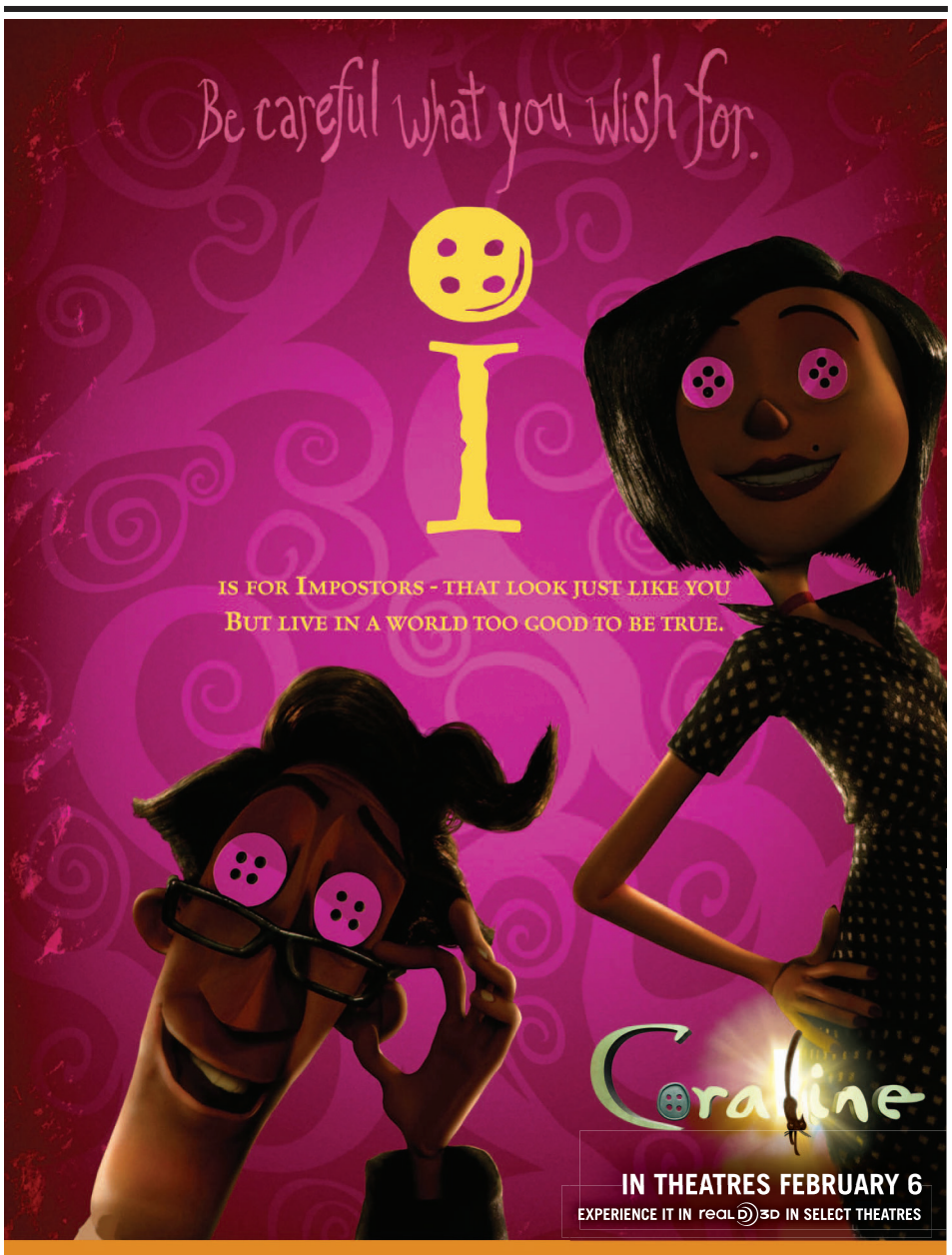
GLOBAL TELEVISION PHOTO

Camille Prins, right, was sent home on Project Runway Canada last night. The Judges didn't like her camouflage dress, left.

Prins says she has wanted to be involved with the show since the first season, so being on the show was a dream come true.

Now that she's off the show Prins will go back to running her Dutch Blonde women's clothing line (dutchblonde.ca) and she hopes to branch out into menswear and children's apparel soon.

While Prins' experience on Project Runway Canada was a positive one, she says it's hard not to feel disappointed. "I was really looking forward to doing some more of the challenges just to push myself to see what I could do."



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The next generation of TV viewers: Old people

IntelleVision

Rick McGinnis

rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

TIME TO PANIC: We've passed the midpoint of the traditional TV season, and while the networks can conceal their growing anxiety behind the smokescreen of economic bad news, the fact is that things haven't gone well, and now is the last moment for fixing it.

As long as the 18-49 demographic is still considered a mix of the football team, the cheerleading squad and the rich kid who lets you drive his BMW, there's no consolation to be had from news that three of the four U.S. networks have lost a considerable chunk of these viewers — a 12-per-cent drop from last year's numbers for ABC and NBC, and 14 per cent loss for Fox, according to a New York Times story.

Only CBS is weathering to demographic exodus, gaining in overall audience and only losing 3 per cent of the 18-49ers, but it has to be remembered that CBS — home of procedurals like Cold Case, Without a Trace, NCIS and the CSI franchise, reality stalwarts Survivor and The Amazing Race and top sitcom Two And A Half Men — is generally considered the house network for the Rogaine generation.

No one who knows the difference between The Shins and The Mars Volta watches CBS to begin with, and if youngsters keep abandoning the networks, we may finally see the emergence of a new consensus among marketing types that young people — probably the most likely to see their disposable income evaporate if the economic downturn continues — aren't the holy grail of audiences anymore.

It may already be happening. The Times piece notes that network strategies aren't looking that audacious — production teams with a proven track record are behind many of the new shows, many of which are spin-offs or forays into safe genres like procedurals.

CBS is preparing a spin-off of NCIS, NBC has put Greg Daniels and Michael Schur of The Office in charge of Amy Poehler's new sitcom, and is filling ER's soon-to-be-vacant slot with Southland, a cop show set in L.A., at least until Jay Leno can take over the space next season.

A few of you might already have noticed that ads for adult incontinence pads and cures for male urinary irregularities have migrated from cable and late night to prime time. Look for more of the same, until the day when some network realizes that enough of their viewers have memory issues for them to just run the same episode of CSI every night.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

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metro Do it daily.

In brief

NEWWORKS ABC has announced the creation of a Thursday night comedy block and has scheduled airtimes for two of its midseason comedies. Starting March 26, the network will air single-mom comedy In the Motherhood on Thursdays at 8 p.m. and move the Christina Applegate-starring sitcom Samantha Who? from Mondays to Thursdays at 8:30 p.m.

REMAKE The saga of Bonnie and Clyde is headed for another film telling, with Hilary Duff and Kevin Zegers in negotiations to play the infamous 1930s bank robbers.

REDUX ABC is flashing the V sign. The network has ordered a pilot for a reimagining of the 1980s miniseries about an alien invasion. The new V will centre on a female Homeland Security agent. REUTERS

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt

metronews.ca/globalstyle

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VA	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 1/28/09	251	308	3	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	The Week the Women Went		CBC News: the fifth estate		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6	JOY	E! News	The Insider	Knight Rider (N) (CC)		Party Monsters: Cabo "Diddy"		Fashion Police (CC)		News (N)
	254	-	8	M	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Omni News: Mandarin Edition		News: Cantonese Edition		Omni News: Punjabi Edition		Metropia
	250	321	9	CTV	etalk (CC)	Hollywood	American Idol (N) (CC)		Criminal Minds "Lo-Fi" (CC)		CSI: NY "Veritas" (CC)		News (N)
	-	-	10	OMNI	The Daily	Frasier (CC)	Stargate SG-1		Third Watch "The Lost"		Scrubs (CC)	Diya (CC)	New Day
	252	336	11	GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	House "97 Seconds" (CC)		Lie to Me "Moral Waiver" (N)		(:02) Life on Mars (N) (CC)		News (N)
	256	389	12	VI	Instant Star	TMZ (N) (CC)	Lost "The Lie" (CC)		Lost "Jughead" (N) (CC)		Law & Order "Lucky Stiff" (N)		News (CC)
	253	359	13	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		13: Fear Is Real (CC)		Hates Chris	Friends (CC)	I Love Money (CC)		EP Daily
	-	-	14	CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	Privileged (CC)		90210 (CC)		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15	CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Evening News	Old Christine	Criminal Minds "Lo-Fi" (CC)		CSI: NY "Veritas" (CC)		News (N)
	287	379	16	NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	Knight Rider (CC)		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order "Lucky Stiff" (N)		News (N)
	602	568	19	W	Will & Grace	Friends (CC)	Grocery Bag	Grocery Bag	How Clean	Too Posh	Maxed Out (N)	Maxed Out	Maxed Out
	288	380	21	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Lost "The Lie" (CC)		Lost "Jughead" (N) (CC)		(:02) Life on Mars (N) (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	-	-	23	KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	Passenger 57 ★★ (1992) Wesley Snipes, Bruce Payne.				King	Still Standing	Scrubs (CC)
	291	383	27	PBS	Steves Europe	Travels-Edge	Make 'em Laugh: The Funny Business of America (N) (CC)				Monty Python's Personal Best		MI-5 (CC)
	290	382	28	FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	American Idol (N) (CC)		Lie to Me "Moral Waiver" (N)		News (N) (CC)		Family Guy
	-	364	43	PBS	Make 'em Laugh: The Funny Business of America (CC)				Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		Make 'em Laugh: Funny	
	296	654	34	SBK	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Punk'd (CC)	South Park	Cheers (CC)	Half & Half	The Insider	Entertainment	Perfect Pullup
	298	653	35	TLA	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Privileged (CC)		90210 (CC)		KTLA Prime News (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	36	WGN	WGN News	NBA Basketball Chicago Bulls at Los Angeles Clippers. (Live) (CC)					Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	My Wife-Kids
	297	652	37	WPX	PIX News at Ten Tong. (N)		Two/Half Men	Friends (CC)	Sex and-City	According-Jim	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Odd Couple
	199	311	76	STR	News (N)	News		Late Show-Letterman		(:37) Kitchen Nightmares		Late Late Show	
news	502	390	26	NW	Jelly Fish Invasion (N) (CC)		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		Jelly Fish Invasion (CC)		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	22	RSP	Best Damn Sports Show		Hockey	Canucks TV	UFC	UFC	Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Ult. Fight 74
	400	400	30	TSN	NHL Hockey	NHL Hockey Nashville Predators at Vancouver Canucks. (Live) (CC)					SportsCentre (Live) (CC)		SportsCentre
	411	457	49	OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman (CC)		Mantracker "Jim and Nicola"		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman
	410	403	54	SCR	Score Update		Hardcore Hockey Talk		Final Score	Final Score	Final Score	Final Score	Final Score
	417	406	55	SC	Wrecked	Wrecked	NASCAR Pre.	Pass Time	Am. Thunder	Am. Thunder	Pinks	Pinks Out	Wrecked
	416	409	144	GLF	Gol TV News	Footballers	Legends	Footballers	Legends	Footballers	Paid Program	Gol TV News	Gol TV News
family	552	543	25	YTV	Adrenaline	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Adrenaline	Prank Patrol	Falcon Beach (CC)		Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50	TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Misadventures	Futurama	The Critic	Chicken	Bromwell High
	557	541	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	553	546	56	TRE	Comfy Couch	Rolie Polie	Max & Ruby	Babar (CC)	Backyard	Dora-Explorer	Go, Diego, Go!	Franklin	Comfy Couch
cable variety	268	354	5	KNO	Into the Wild	Meerkat	Man Made Marvels (N) (CC)		Live! From the National Arts Centre (CC)				Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20	CMT	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Three Chords	Tara Diaries	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Reba (CC)	Reba (CC)	Hope & Faith
	570	580	24	MM	Video on Trial	Video on Trial	PunchMuch		America's Best Dance Crew		disBand	Born to Be	Spotlight
	600	564	29	H&G	Hid Potential	Really Big Flip	Holmes on Homes (CC)		Property	Unsellable	Mansions	Property Shop	Hid Potential
	615	520	31	A&E	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Parking Wars
	628	584	32	SPKE	UFC	UFC	UFC Unleashed		CSI: NY (CC)		CSI: NY "All Access" (CC)		CSI: NY (CC)
	521	560	34	TLC	Extreme Forensics (CC)		Personal Justice (CC)		Solved "The Watch Man"		Extreme Forensics (CC)		Mystery Diag.
	616	522	39	SHO	The Outer Limits "The Gun"		About a Girl	About a Girl	The Guard "Waheguru" (CC)		Big Love (CC)		House (CC)
	620	523	40	BVO	Opera	Broadway	Law & Order (CC)		Without a Trace (CC)		Rasputin ★★★ (1996) Alan Rickman. (CC)		
	601	562	41	SLC	Filthy Rich: Cattle Drive (CC)		ET Canada	Matchmaker	Real Housewives of OC		Trading Spouses		Biggest Loser
	520	505	42	DIS	Mayday "Phantom Strike"		Daily Planet (CC)		MythBusters (CC)		Dirty Jobs (CC)		Mayday
	522	506	44	HIS	NCIS "Friends and Lovers"		Cities of the Underworld		Gladiator Graveyard (CC)		NCIS "Friends and Lovers"		Inventions
	627	528	45	SPC	Rabbit Fall	Rabbit Fall	Stargate SG-1 "Point of View"		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Star Trek: Voyager (CC)		Star Trek: Ent.
	294	650	47	TBS	Meet-Browns	Meet-Browns	House-Payne	House-Payne	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Spanglish ★★★ (2004) Adam Sandler. (CC)		
	619	525	48	TROP	Reality	Ad Persuasion	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	603	561	52	FN	Top Chef Super Bowl cook-off. (N) (CC)			Dinner	Challenge "Cereal Skylines"		Iron Chef America		Top Chef
	626	547	57	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs (CC)		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Jon Dore	RENO 911!	Daily Show
	320	621	60	CEN	(6:30) Young Triffie (2006) (CC)		Dexter Sincere proposal.		Californication	Dreamgirls ★★★ (2006) Jamie Foxx, Beyoncé Knowles. (CC)			
	581	566	101	MTV	The Real World "Brooklyn"		MTV Live	After	Next (CC)	Parent Control	The Real World "Brooklyn"		MTV Live
	261	394	102	V	Life & Times Rick Hansen.		Poltergeist: The Legacy		The Cheap Detective ★★★ (1978, Comedy) Peter Falk. (CC)				Paid Program
	-	-	109	MUL	Matchmaker	Mom's-Upset	Van. Nights	Iranian Pop	Sabor Latino		Sabor Musical	Travel TV	Patrol World

critics' corner

Too Posh to Wash
Jeans pockets should hold handkerchiefs, not substitute for them. Tell that to the 23-year-old subject of this new episode. Using her jeans as tissues is the least of her hygiene problems; she also still has the glue on her teeth from the braces she ripped off more than a year ago — which is also the last time she wore a clean bra. Kim Woodburn and Aggie MacKenzie swoop in with microbiologist Derren Ready to give this young woman a wake-up call. 9:30 PM on W

The New Adventures of Old Christine
Christine (Julia Louis-Dreyfus) is getting married! Who's the lucky guy? Um, actually it's Barb (Wanda Sykes). She's in danger of being deported to the Bahamas, so Christine, like a good friend, offers to marry her so she can stay. She's not the only one hearing wedding bells, though; Richard (Clark Gregg) has decided to pop the question to New Christine (Emily Rutherfurd) in "A Decent Proposal." 8:30 PM on CBS

Halliwell gets engaged

Spice Girl Geri Halliwell is engaged after a whirlwind romance, People magazine has confirmed. The redheaded Ginger Spice, 36, is set to wed Italian yacht-company owner Fabrizio Politi, 34. **PEOPLE.COM**

Celebrity Buzz

Amy to visit prison in bid to keep hubby

MARRIAGE Amy Winehouse is set to visit her husband in prison in a bid to stop him from filing for divorce, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Rehab singer — who has been romantically linked with 21-year-old actor Josh Bowman and a fitness instructor named Andrew while holidaying in St. Lucia — has applied to see Blake Fielder-Civil and is set to return to the U.K. any day to save their marriage.

A friend of the 25-year-old star said that, "Since he began divorce proceedings Amy has decided she wants to try and work things out.

"She has applied to visit him in jail in Britain and if he accepts she will fly back. We will see what his priority is. Amy or her money."

Blake — who is serving a 27-month sentence for perverting the course of justice and grievous bodily harm — is reportedly planning to ask for half of Winehouse's fortune in a divorce settlement.

Despite being photographed frolicking with Josh on her holiday and reports they frequently romped, Winehouse has insisted she "still loves" Blake.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

'Adopt me': Clooney

PEOPLE George Clooney has made an offer few can refuse: He has placed himself up for adoption, people.com reports.

"I always wanted to be adopted, but I couldn't find anyone," said the star, speaking at a Newseum event in Washington, D.C., with his father, former Ohio news anchor Nick Clooney, and veteran journalist Bill Small on either side of him.

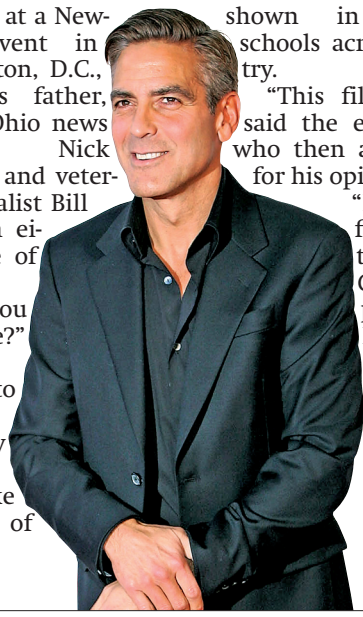
"Will you adopt me?" George said to Small. "I'm very wealthy. I'll take care of you."

Talk of adoption started after Nick Clooney's observation that his son's 2005 film, Good Night, and Good Luck, about iconic CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow, is now being shown in journalism schools across the country.

"This film has legs," said the elder Clooney, who then asked his son for his opinion.

"I don't care for that," said the jocular George — prompting Nick to respond: "I never cared for this kid — his sister's great."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Angie and Brad to rent classy $60 million US estate

COUPLE What could make Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt's upcoming rental of a $60 million US estate in the Gold Coast area of New York's Long Island even more fabulous? How about throwing in the use of the property owner's $90 million luxury yacht?

Star Magazine is reporting the Hollywood couple — and their six children — will be moving into the Sassafras estate in the exclusive waterfront town of Lloyd Neck, while Angelina begins area filming for the spy thriller Salt in March.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Airbrushed teeth in Sienna photo

VANITY Airbrushing is nothing new in the fashion industry, but have you heard of someone's teeth needing to be airbrushed? Femalefirst.co.uk is reporting that was the case for Sienna Miller.

The website says a new documentary reveals that when the actress was shot for the cover of American Vogue in 2007 the magazine's editor Anna Wintour voiced her concerns over Sienna's oral health as she had "too many fillings."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Affleck admits he wasn't always lucky in love

DATING Ben Affleck was "never very good" at dating, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 36-year-old actor — who had relationships with Gwyneth Paltrow and Jennifer Lopez before marrying Jennifer Garner — admits starring in new romantic comedy He's Just Not That Into You was a challenge because he hasn't always been lucky in love.

"You're asking me for dating advice? I can't give any — I was never very good at it, I don't think anyone should follow my advice," he said.

Ben added he enjoyed making the film — which tells the stories of several young men and women in different stages of relationships — because it reminded him of his life before he was married.

"This film showed me that I'm happy I'm married. But I do like listening to boys when they are dating, and all the actors in the movie are very good. We have all these different archetypes — the one who's trying too hard and is a really nice guy but the girl doesn't like him anyway. Then there's the player who takes a girl under his wing."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Rourke's Wrestler injuries

PEOPLE Mickey Rourke had to be helped up stairs by his girlfriend after suffering so many injuries from The Wrestler, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 56-year-old actor — who recently won a Golden Globe Award for his role as Randy (The Ram) Robinson in the movie — wasn't prepared for the effects the brutal fighting scenes would have on his body.

"I had to try harder to get up in the morning. And because of my extra bulk, a football knee from high school acted up again. Two hundred years later! And my woman had to get behind me and push me up the stairs. I was pathetic looking," he said.

"So my knees wouldn't hold up, because of all the extra weight and the exercise. And all the injuries you get from being thrown down, you know?"

Rourke recently revealed he is planning to step into the wrestling ring for real, after WWE owner Vince McMahon got in touch.

"Now, Vince wants me to do WrestleMania in Houston. Chris Jericho, I'm coming after you're a—! You better get yourself in shape brother. I'm going to do it! You bet you're a—; I'm going to do it!"

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Lohan loses a lot of weight lately

PEOPLE Lindsay Lohan's shrinking frame has had folks worried lately, as the erratic actress has lost a noticeable amount of weight. But her publicist is working hard to explain all that. "Lindsay is aware that she's lost some weight due to stress," Lohan's rep tells Hollyscoop.

"But we recently did a photo shoot and she ate two full meals."

No word on what's causing all this stress, but her rocky relationship with Samantha Ronson can't be helping.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Melt away that frosty landline with tons of talk.

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Friday Rain 60% 7° / 3°
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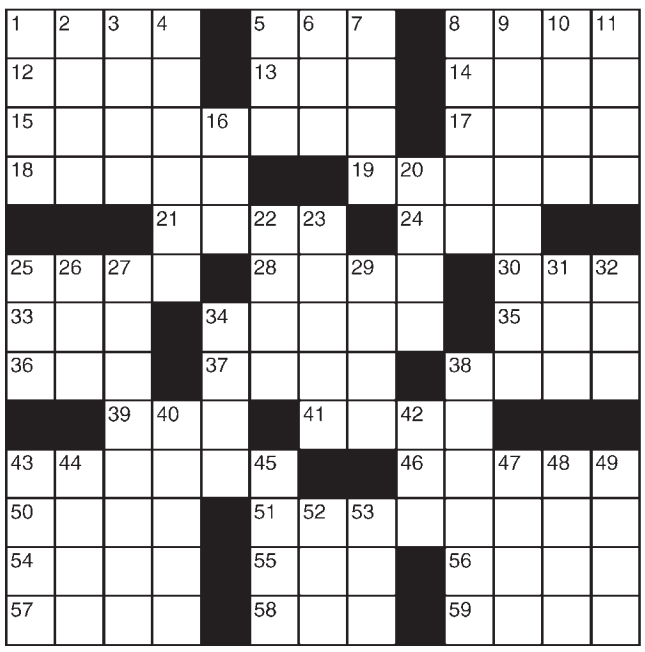
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Light-years away
5 Weep loudly
8 Vicinity
12 Theatre box
13 Crony
14 Rent
15 Lamb and eggplant recipe
17 Libertine's feeling
18 — au poivre
19 Explosions
21 Pinocchio, notably
24 Braying beast
25 George Herman Ruth
28 Campus hangout
30 Recede
33 Mess up
34 Fastidious
35 Have a bug
36 Ostrich's kin
37 Right on the map?
38 Zealots' group
39 "Casablanca" pianist
41 Apiece
43 Rigatoni and rotini
46 5-Down features
50 Double Stuf cookie
51 Subject of Frederick I
54 Pottery oven
55 "— Town"
56 Notions holder
57 Relaxation
58 X rating?
59 Nitwit

Crossword down

1 Charitable gifts
2 Yard portion
3 Chills and fever
4 Auction, essentially
5 Masseur's workplace, maybe
6 Furniture wood
7 Spill the beans
8 Holdup man?
9 Philosopher Jean-Jacques
10 Formerly, formerly
11 Picnic invaders
16 Schuss
20 Gentlewoman
22 Blue hue
23 Charlotte — (dessert)
25 Spelling contest
26 Branch
27 NATO headquarters site
29 "The Thin Man" dog
31 Puppeteer Baird
32 Sandwich shop order
34 Damage assessment org.
38 Pursued
40 Expiate (for)
42 Couric's network
43 Prod
44 Met melody
45 Location
47 One of the Jackson 5
48 Truckload
49 Fit of peevishness
52 Wish otherwise
53 Coffee dispenser

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		4				3		
	3		4		8		7	
8	9						1	4
		7	9		6	1		
2								3
		6	5		2	7		
1	7						5	2
	5		3		1		9	
		9				4		

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

G	U	L	F	■	R	E	M	■	M	A	M	E
A	G	A	R	■	I	R	A	■	A	M	I	D
S	H	O	E	H	O	R	N	■	D	O	N	G
■	■	■	E	A	T	■	D	I	C	K	E	Y
P	S	A	L	M	■	N	A	S	A	■	■	■
E	A	S	Y	■	H	O	R	N	P	I	P	E
E	R	A	■	G	O	T	I	T	■	D	E	L
P	I	P	E	D	O	W	N	■	S	E	E	S
■	■	■	M	A	K	O	■	S	H	A	N	A
R	E	D	E	Y	E	■	S	U	E	■	■	■
O	V	E	R	■	D	O	W	N	L	O	A	D
B	I	N	G	■	U	S	A	■	V	I	L	A
E	L	S	E	■	P	U	G	■	E	L	A	N

1	8	4	5	9	7	3	6	2
3	2	9	8	4	6	5	1	7
7	5	6	3	2	1	4	9	8
5	4	3	2	1	8	9	7	6
2	9	1	6	7	4	8	3	5
6	7	8	9	3	5	1	2	4
4	1	5	7	6	3	2	8	9
9	3	7	4	8	2	6	5	1
8	6	2	1	5	9	7	4	3

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Filet Mignon Salad

INGREDIENTS:

4 red peppers
10 oz (300 g) filet mignon
1/2 tsp (2 ml) pepper
2 garlic cloves
1 lb (500 g) green beans, trimmed
4 tbsp (60 ml) balsamic vinegar
2 tsp (10 ml) extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp (25 ml) finely chopped shallot
1/4 lb (125 g) mixed salad greens
6 tomatoes, cut into 1/4-in (0.5-cm) wedges

METHOD:

1. Preheat broiler. Place red peppers in broiler pan. Cook until skins are blistered and blackened, turning frequently. Place in plastic bag, seal tightly and let steam 10 minutes. Peel away blackened skins from peppers, seed and cut into chunks.
2. Meanwhile, lay filet flat on cutting board and slit lengthwise three-quarters of the way through. Open up like a book and press flat. Sprinkle with 1/4 tsp (1 ml) pepper. Cut 1 garlic clove in half and rub cut sides all over beef. Barbecue or broil beef until done to taste, about 3 minutes per side for medium. Thinly slice beef.
3. Cook beans in boiling water until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Drain and rinse immediately with cold water.
4. Crush remaining garlic clove. Whisk vinegar, oil, garlic, shallot and remaining pepper in small bowl. Divide mixed salad greens among 4 plates and arrange meat, pepper, beans and tomatoes on top. Drizzle with dressing and serve.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Fate takes a hand and delayed money arrives. A man wants to run away due to lost trust. You'd be happier somewhere else.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Try not to be upset by guilty feelings. Your good deeds are repaid twice over. Ask questions in order to lower your stress level.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Give yourself a fresh start. Hurt feelings will erupt temporarily. If someone sees you as a hero, try to live up to it.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A meeting has nothing to do with you. Somebody with a deceptive smile should be avoided. You can tell that something has failed.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
It'll be great if you can take a different approach. Bravado is important when you're avoiding a call. Stay away from scandalous actions all day.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
A friend may be loyal but is also indiscreet. A habitual favour-beggar regrets a previous request. A second chance can come at night.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Your patience is rewarded by a forceful person. A traveller will convince you that he's right. Friendly actions will become an issue.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
A timid person is playing a waiting game. Try to have reasonable expectations of distant friends. Behave reasonably to obtain more freedom.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
An incredible interruption comes up after lunch. An old man is excited about a mystery romance. You'll find a tempting bargain.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
Doors will open after an emotional predicament. Some people are in a foul mood. A notorious man requests your help, but you'll refuse.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Hammer home your point with a very light touch. You'll enjoy someone's amusing discussion. A generous man will be your lucky charm.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Coffee shop talk leads to deception in a company. A polite person is making amends. An unpleasant creature can be dealt with by a friend.

WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

1. Eisenhower's Dutch embankments (1)
2. Chimney dirt on a leg end (1)
3. Identical moniker (1)
4. Low-in-fat king's wife (1)
5. Picasso's countrymen disappear (2)
6. At-bat player's shaky nerves (2)
7. Vote-seeking game plan bubbly (2)

ANSWERS
1. IKES DIKES 2. FOOT SOOT 3. SAME NAME 4. LEAN QUEEN
5. SPANISH VANISH 6. HITTERS JITTERS 7. CAMPAIGN CHAMPAGNE

1-28-09

This day in history

JAN 28, 1547: Henry VIII dies. His nine year old son, Edward VI becomes King, and the first Protestant ruler of England.
JAN 28, 1855: The first locomotive runs from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean on the Panama Railway.
JAN 28, 1909: United States troops leave Cuba with the exception of Guantanamo Bay Naval Base after being there since the Spanish-American War.
JAN 28, 1958: The Lego company patented their design of Lego bricks, still compatible with bricks produced today.
JAN 28, 1986: Space Shuttle Challenger breaks apart after liftoff killing all seven astronauts onboard.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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5720 East Blvd.
689 Thurlow St.
3 - 1855 Burrard St.
3343 West Broadway
2748 Rupert St.
1 - 525 Seymour St.
150 - 625 Howe St.
105 - 950 West Broadway
1707 Robson St.
1092 Kingsway
10 - 3490 Kingsway

Aldergrove
310 - 26310 Fraser Hwy.

Abbotsford
Sevenoaks Shopping Centre
2 - 32915 South Fraser Way
1 - 2142 Clearbrook Rd.
401 - 2140 Sumas Way

Burnaby
Brentwood Mall
Crystal Square
Lougheed Mall
Metrotown/Metropolis
214B - 4501 North Rd.
4711 Kingsway
7531 Market Crossing
111 - 3823 Henning Dr.
204B - 3430 Brighton Ave.

Chilliwack
Cottonwood Mall
103 - 45300 Luckakuck Way
11 - 45905 Yale Rd.
7544B Vedder Rd.

Cloverdale
201 - 17725 64th Ave.

Coquitlam
Coquitlam Centre
101 - 3278 Westwood St.
5 - 3000 Lougheed Hwy.
2700B Barnet Hwy.
22 - 2988 Glen Dr.
2 - 901 Lougheed Hwy.

New Westminster
Royal City Centre

Delta
Scottsdale Mall
7235 120th St.
1517 56th St.

Langley
Walnut Grove Town Centre
Willowbrook Shopping Centre
3 - 19638 Fraser Hwy.
103 - 19700 Langley Bypass
C104 - 20159 88th Ave.
19971 96th Ave.
C7 - 20202 66th Ave.

Maple Ridge
22661 Lougheed Hwy.

Mission
100 - 32670 Lougheed Hwy.
318 - 32555 London Ave.

North Vancouver
Capilano Mall
127 - 1199 Lynn Valley Rd.
1295 Marine Dr.
1748 Lonsdale Ave.
1392 Main St.

Port Moody
202 Newport Dr.

Pitt Meadows
735 - 19800 Lougheed Hwy.

Richmond
Aberdeen Centre
Admiralty Centre Mall
Ironwood Mall
Lansdowne Mall
Parker Place
Richmond Centre
115 - 12571 Bridgeport Rd.

Surrey
Central City Shopping Centre
Guildford Town Centre
201 - 13734 104th Ave.
135 - 12477 88th Ave.
2404 King George Hwy.
1675 128th St.
108 - 7380 King George Hwy.
403 - 15940 Fraser Hwy.
10310A 152nd St.

West Vancouver
Park Royal Shopping Centre
North/South

White Rock
Semiahmoo Shopping Centre
10 - 3189 King George Hwy.

OKANAGAN/NORTHERN BC

Aberdeen Mall (Kamloops)
Northills Centre (Kamloops)
Orchard Park Mall (Kelowna)
Spall Plaza (Kelowna)
Cherry Lane Shopping Centre (Penticton)
Pine Centre (Prince George)
Piccadilly Mall (Salmon Arm)
Village Green Mall (Vernon)

Whistler
7009 Nesters Rd.

Squamish
38116 2nd Ave.